

Tribes And Tribal Life

Pages: 455

Publisher: Centrum Press (June 30, 2014)

Format: pdf, epub

Language: English

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TRIBES AND TRIBAL LIFE TRIBES AND TRIBAL LIFE Dr. R. P. Sagar **CENTRUM PRESS** NEW DELHI-110002 (INDIA) **CENTRUM PRESS** H.O.: 4360/4, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi-110002 (India) Tel.: 23278000, 23261597, 23255577, 23286875 B.O.: No. 1015, Ist Main Road, BSK IIIrd Stage IIIrd Phase, IIIrd Block, Bengaluru-560 085 (India) Tel.: 080-41723429 Email: centrumpress@gmail.com Visit us at: www.centrumpress.com Tribes and Tribal Life © Reserved First Edition, 2014 ISBN 978-93-5084-100-6 PRINTED IN INDIA Digitally Printed at Replika Press Pvt. Ltd.

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Preface The tribals of India have been in contact with other people for a very long time and have been greatly influenced by them. The degree of influence is proportional to the intermingling with outsiders. Tribes-people like the Gond, Bhil, and Halbi almost live like Hindus do in the outside world. After independence (1947), due to various developmental and welfare projects executed by government and social agencies, it has become extremely difficult to distinguish between the tribal and the non-tribal way of life. Among the 68 million citizens of India who are members of tribal groups, the religious concepts, terminologies, and practices are as varied as the hundreds of tribes, but members of these groups have one thing in common: they are under constant pressure from the major organized religions. 'Indigenous' people is the term which is more widely used and accepted in the international circles. That term has been deliberately avoided in this paper. In the Indian context, tribal or adivasi people of India do not necessarily precede their settlement in this country to all other communities. It is difficult to establish who were the original dwellers in chronological terms. The coexistence of fundamentally different culture patterns and styles of living has always been a characteristic feature of the Indian stage. Unlike most parts of the world, in India, the arrival of new immigrants and the spread of their way of life did not necessarily cause the disappearance of earlier and materially less advanced ethnic groups. This book contains the fundamental and basic information of subject and the selection of contents makes it an appropriate textbook for the students. – Editor

1: Introduction

TRIBAL LIFE OF INDIA Put your foot on the land of India and you can feel the difference. The Scorching Heat, the harsh yet soft rain drops, the snow which melts and the golden leaves which fall upon you as you cross the streets. In the midst the of the Himalayas, the mighty Tungbhadra

River and the three seas which surround the country, there live the people of India called – The Indians. Running with the life, changing with the time and adopting with the winds, the people of this country have not changed much. They still value their values and yet walk with the beast of Modern Life. So if the question of – Are there any Tribes Left in the Country comes, one has to say – No. For all the normal environment, we don't get to see any of the Tribes. The people which we see in the normal day to day life are ones – who speak the same language, wear almost the same clothes and have the same variety of food. So where is the question of Tribes being ALIVE come from? And do they exist. For all those who are in doubt – there are tribes in India. Several of them and covering all the parts of the country. But to find them, one has to go deep in the forest or places which seem to be lacking of inhabitation. There in the forelone places, you will find the Tribes Of India – living and thriving. India is a country of tribes. Why so.. for the reason India is made of Villages. And till the day there are Villages in the Country, there are bound to be Tribes. So how many tribes are there. I am not from a Government Department, or else I would have been able to give you an exact count. Roughly saying the tribes make 2 – 3 % of the entire population of India. Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh are some of the states which comprise of Tribes of India. To mention some of them are the Mundas, Orans, Santhalis, Bodos, Dimasas, Gaddis. They are a part of India. These have been living for generations in the lands of the country called India. Several research teams from the Government organization, each year do research on these tribes. It is impossible to find the original way of living of these tribes these days. Yet there are tribes, rare of them who still live the way their ancestors lived. To see how they live and what they do, one has to go and live among them with the help of a Guide. For the reason that most of them still speak their own languages and are not very familiar with Hindi or English language. Like the Bodo Tribe, they speak Tibeto – Burmese language, Mundas speak Mundese language. Living in the aboriginal forms, these are still able to sustain their lives with the help of the Government. However there are other tribes which have changed with the time – keeping some of their ancestral values and adapting some of the new ones. Hmars, Dimasa and the Orans are some of them. To be able to live and survive in the coming age, these tribes have taken to odd – jobs for survival – making shoes, doing fishing, making shafts and so on. These jobs make there survival seemingly good, still the survival seems blurred. Still there lies the danger of slow extinction-these tribes need to be protected by us all.

CALCULATING TRIBAL LIFE WITH CULTURAL STYLE Nature unfolds scenic beauty and so do different cultures, of which the most exciting study comes in with tribal contents; their culture and lifestyle. The group constitute a mere percentage of 8.08% of the total Indian population and often quoted as old settlers with variability in languages. Tribal people, popularly called Adivasi spends a simple yet meaningful livelihood, thereby maintaining their primitive culture as well as filling their breadbasket. Treasuring old culture: Both tribal men and women plays a vital role in preserving cultural dictionary. Traditional stones, beads, birds quills and off-course shawls are a must-have attires in their wardrobe. Were man believes in farming, women take active part in weaving traditional shawls and knitting sweaters for their dear ones. The most common farming technique lies in Jhum cultivation (cutting well-grown corns following with burning the land to increase its fertility); a primitive agricultural style. Men sweats out their whole day with cultivation whereas women are home-makers, engaging themselves to caring their family. Other then cooking their daily food staff at times they make their favourite local drinks and pickles (eg: 'pithamadhu', 'akhoni') so as to sweep away their exhausted life with its typical taste.

THE CONCEPT OF "TRIBAL" Emeneau (1996) has identified several features of "tribalism" where there is much more stress, as compared with the social units of Hinduism, on kinship as the over-riding factor in the unit's organization; reliance, in some cases on swidden ('slash-and-burn') agricultural economy; lack of asceticism so prominent in Hinduism; with a consequent fondness for the pleasures of the senses In food, alcoholic drinks, sex, song or dance (i.e., at funerals, ritual occasions, etc.). Further Hindu communities belong to 'jatis' identifiable through their values. The 'tribals' are outside the Sanskritic system of written codes of Hinduism, and they are not 'jatis'. But jati and tribe are, however, not in opposition to one another but are a cultural continuum, i.e., either a pure tribal, or a pure jati, under pressure from the Sanskritic tradition takes on jati

characteristics. Based on areal factors, for example, tribes living in hilly isolated areas are 'non-jatis'. "The Badagas who were a jati people when they came to the Nilgiris in the 15th century and then adopted tribal characteristics are non-jatis. ... There are the aboriginal tribes "especially in Orissa who use cloth woven for them by Hindu weavers from yarn they spin. When the Saora yarn is ready it is taken to a Pano neighbour for weaving". (ibid)

LANGUAGE AND TRIBESAs of 1991 Census, 8.8% of the total population of India is tribal. 93.80% are rural based and 6.20% are urbanized. Of the 623 tribal communities, 123 (19.47%) are monolingual. Tribal bilingualism is rural whereas non-tribal bilingualism is urban. The shift to non-tribal mother tongues has increased from 51% (1971) to 58% (1981). Tribals in India originate from five language families, i.e. Andamanese, Austro-Asiatic, Dravidian, and Tibeto-Burman. It is also important to point out that those tribals 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 (Munda) family and the Indo-Aryan. In the Jharkhand area, languages are from the Indo-Aryan, North Dravidian and Austro-Asiatic.

TRIBAL TERRITORIES OF INDIATribals in India live in the following five territories.

i. The Himalayan belt: (Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, hills of Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh)

ii. Central India: Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa, and Madhya Pradesh. 55% of the total tribal population of India lives in this belt.

iii. Western India: Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Goa, Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

iv. The Dravidian region: Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

v. Andaman, Nicobar and Lakshadweep islands. ***Language is a Significant Feature of Culture***

The grammar of a language is essentially a culturally significant unit of behavior. Within the cognitive world of a group, its terminological system is encoded and decoded. When shift in language takes place, reference to the standard symbolic system of the culture shifts. Kinship terms, both address and reference, is an example, so also are personal names (Frake, 1980). If we consider words for birds, the Brazilian Indian tribe has no word for 'parrot' but only 'kinds of parrots'. The concept 'to cross'/dattu/in Kannada has several contextual meanings in Jenu Kuruba, i.e., 'to cross', 'to climb up', 'to climb down', 'jump', etc. Among the several small tribes, the 'concepts' for 'color' and 'numerals' are limited to their eco-system. Similarly, concepts for land, animals, plants, soil, wind, weather, social relations and supernaturals are different. ***Language and Social Identity*** Language and ethnic identity are significant cultural parameters in the life-style of its speakers. Mahapatra (1980), discussing ethnic identity and language, shows that, in most cases, ethnicity is the primary focus of group identity and that language and identity are co-extensive, or one is derivative of the other. There are tribal groups in India like the Malto speaking Paharia of the Santal Parganas who are specifically defined as belonging to a particular ethnic group. "The Paharia identifies himself as "en malen", "I am the language speaking man", and rejects others as "ah gohel", "he is a different language speaking outsider". In other words, every individual is bound and attached by birth to kin relationships, religion, language and social practices, as belonging to a collectivity and is thus influenced by social norms and social values. ***Language Change in Contact Situations***

Extensive research conducted among these groups indicates that "distinct and seemingly strange grammars of various tribal languages are little windows through which we can see a distinct and different mode of perceiving and conceiving the world ... by these speech communities" (Abbi, 1996). Influenced by contact situations these groups have evolved ways and means to adopt and adapt to on-going change. Tribal diversity seen as complex has resulted in processes of convergence, with the major languages and vice-versa. Pilot-Raichoor's 1996 study of the verb stem of Badaga of the Nilgiris, shows that contrary to the theory of dominant language power, the language is influenced by neighbouring tribal languages and not that of Kannada, the dominant language. Mohanty (1996) discusses aspects of contact and convergence of phonological aspects, i.e., the loss of /o/ in Kui, Sora, and Oriya. Israel (1996) shows morphological changes in the case of Kui with Oriya as a result of language contact. Annamalai (1996) discussing the linguistic diversity of India cites the example of Jenu Kuruba, a dialect of Kannada, and Irula and Badaga in the Nilgiris and points out that in a dialect-language-continuum

it is difficult to distinguish boundaries between tribal and non-tribal languages. Singh (1996) shows how traditional occupations, such as, hunting and gathering have been reduced by 44%. Terrace and settled cultivations have increased thereby suggesting that they are settling down as peasants. Khubchandani (1996) points out that tribes of the central belt of India over-powered by the major regional languages use their mother tongue only at home, whereas among the tribes from the Tibeto-Burman languages from the north-east, due to political movements for autonomous political power over the region, language shift is arrested. As Fraake (1980) points out, "any verbal response which conforms to the phonology and grammar of a language is necessarily a culturally significant unit of behaviour ... which ultimately is applicable to the 'semantic' analysis of any culturally meaningful behaviour". Therefore, language shift necessarily entails culture change.

WOMEN IN TRIBAL SOCIETIES OF INDIA Who is a tribal? The definition may vary with the purpose for which it is required. A politician in India with a palatial bungalow, car, color television, video set, and a fat bank balance could still claim to be a tribal, just because his fore-fathers happened to belong to a government-recognized tribe. He might have used that humble origin of his to amass enormous wealth by exploiting the system. His entire family, including the women, may pretend to be ultra-modern and display much artificial sophistication in their dealings with others. Since such neo-tribals are increasing in number, it becomes very difficult to study genuine tribals who from time immemorial have been true to the nature. The tribals of India have been in contact with other people for a very long time and have been greatly influenced by them. The degree of influence is proportional to the intermingling with outsiders. Tribes-people like the Gond, Bhil, and Halbi almost live like Hindus do in the outside world. After independence (1947), due to various developmental and welfare projects executed by government and social agencies, it has become extremely difficult to distinguish between the tribal and the non-tribal way of life. Like the native (formerly called "red") Indians of North America and the aborigines of Australia, some tribes in India (such as the Todas of Nilgiri Hills) have become mere show-pieces, for the sole purpose of attracting foreign tourists. Other tribes like the Halakki Gowdas of the Indian west-coast have adapted themselves to agriculture. Some other tribes have taken to mining and hence it is almost impossible to find pure tribals who have remained unchanged for centuries. Fortunately for historians, anthropologists and sociologists, there are still a few tribes in the Bastar district of the state of Madhya Pradesh, which are totally unaffected by any developmental program, and therefore are used here as a model for the study of "Women in Tribal Societies." These tribes are restricted to the Abujamara area of the district, which is totally cut off from the rest of the country by mountains, hills, rivers, springs, ever-green forests and a total lack of roads and communications. The authors visited this area and studied these tribes for a year on a fellowship from the Karnataka State Literary Academy. This paper is therefore based more on personal experiences and anecdotes than on published research papers, and this has resulted in a reduced number of formal references.

TRIBAL PEOPLE OF INDIA: A BROAD OVERVIEW 'Indigenous' people is the term which is more widely used and accepted in the international circles. That term has been deliberately avoided in this paper. In the Indian context, tribal or adivasi people of India do not necessarily precede their settlement in this country to all other communities. It is difficult to establish who were the original dwellers in chronological terms. Tribal communities in India have lived along with non-tribal communities belonging to different religions and cultures for several centuries. Beteille (1986) has pointed out, "Western civilizations presented these areas in modern times, and tribe and civilization stood opposed in every particular of race, language and culture. In any parts of the old world the situation was different. The tribe and civilization had coexisted for centuries if not millennia, and were closely implicated in each other from ancient to modern times (Beteille, 1986). This was the case in India. Therefore, they cannot be compared with the aboriginal or indigenous people of Australia, New Zealand or America. This difference has to be recognized and understood. Tribal people never lived in complete isolation from the rest of the society. But their nature of contact was substantially limited. References to communities – vana jatis – living in the forest are found in ancient texts. Official recognition of adivasis, as a category distinct from the rest is found

in the census during the British rule, mainly because tribal people did not conform to the general pattern of the Hindu caste structure and religious belief system. The Indian constitution gives the status of "Scheduled Tribes" to over four hundred communities¹. Relative isolation, largely self sufficient lifestyle with minimum specialization of functions, social system with no hierarchy and strong sense of belonging to their habitat are main social and economic features that define tribal communities (Sharma, in press). It is on the basis of these socio economic features that one can regard tribal people of India similar to the indigenous people in other parts of the world, not necessarily due to their chronological precedence. About 8.08 % of the Indian population belongs to the Scheduled Tribes. 461 tribal communities have been identified in India which are unevenly spread across the country. A large concentration of tribal communities is found in the Central provinces of India, the middle belt and the North eastern states. About 92 % of the tribal people in India live in rural areas (Government of India, 1991), almost all of them in areas which are either dry, forested or hilly. Most of them depend on agriculture and minor forest produce to sustain their life. As pointed out earlier, tribal and non-tribal communities in India have co-existed for centuries, influencing each other in different ways. But the level of contact has been limited. During the British rule, policy of isolation and non-interference was adopted. Administratively, tribal belts were classified as 'excluded' or 'partially excluded' areas. None of the legislative acts applied to these areas, unless specifically directed by the Governor, who, in consultation with the Governor General had to make regulations for 'peace and good governance' of these areas. As a result of this approach, the traditional tribal system of governance remained largely uninterrupted. But at the same time, it was the colonial regime which systematically introduced the concept of individual property ownership of land and other natural resources. Indian Forest Act of 1878 established absolute propriety right of the State over forest land and Land Acquisition Act came in operation in 1894. These acts served the principle of the 'Eminent Domain' giving supreme authority to the State to control and own all the property within the country's territory. But this intrusion was not meekly accepted by tribal communities. Rebellion in the tribal belts and stiff resistance of adivasis across the Central province to British rule resulted in legislation like Chhota Nagpur Tenancy Act or Central Province Land Alienation Bill, 1916 which aimed at restricting alienation of land from adivasis to non-adivasis. But because of legislative, administrative loopholes and the State's unquestioned right to acquire land for public purpose, land alienation continued. "One of the most tragic consequences of the break down of isolation of tribal regions in the name of development, and the introduction of alien concepts of private ownership of property and state ownership of forests, was massive and steady alienation of lands held in the past by tribals into the hands of non-tribals" (Mander) In independent India, excluded and partially excluded areas were transformed into sixth and fifth schedule areas respectively. The main difference was that the executive powers of the state automatically extended to the schedule areas, unless directed by the Governor. The Land Acquisition Act formulated in the British era, is used even today with only minimal alterations serving as the main tool to "acquire" land from people for a "public purpose". What is public purpose is not legally defined. The decision lies with the State. The State is supposed to protect its people and to know what is best for them. Hence, its decision regarding public purpose is not to be questioned. After independence the policy stresses the need to recognize tribal rights over land and forest and to let them "develop along the lines of their own genius", but in reality, tribal communities have been progressively alienated from their traditional rights over natural resources like land, forest, river and that has eroded the very basis of their existence. While 40 % general population lives below poverty, 58 % of Scheduled Castes and 94 % Scheduled Tribes live in poverty according 1983-84 figures of the planning commission (Savyasaachi, 1998). Thus, despite constitutional provisions like protective discrimination and reservations, on most development indicators like health and literacy tribal communities continue to lag behind, even after 50 years of India's independence.

THE NOTION OF DEVELOPMENT In independent India, national development has been largely equated with economic growth and surplus. Large, centralized industries, irrigation projects have been symbols of such development, which through the process of industrialization promised to set India on the path of modernization and development. One of the inevitable outcomes of this has

been massive environmental degradation and 'development induced displacement'. Immediately after independence, a series of large dams were planned and built on some of the major rivers in India. Large dams promised to solve the problem of hunger and starvation by providing irrigation and boosting food production, controlling floods and providing much needed electricity for industrial development. It was this grand promise that prompted Pandit Nehru, our first Prime Minister, to call dams "secular temples of modern India". Environmental and social costs of such large dams were thought to be an inevitable price that one had to pay for such development. Socio-ecological costs of large dams were grossly underestimated and largely ignored. When recognized in passing, they were justified by invoking utilitarian logic of "few people have to sacrifice the greater national good". Dam building in India has been regarded as the sole responsibility of engineers and technical experts. People's movements and researchers have brought the social, ecological and political considerations in large dams to the forefront, but in the dominant view, participation of people in the process of planning development projects is still thought to be irrelevant. Sundar (1997) in her interview with the Collector of Bastar about a proposed steel plant got a response which is fairly representative of what bureaucrats think about people's right to know and participate in the process of decision making. "... (the collector) argued that there had never been any precedent for informing the people beforehand about impending displacement. 'If people were consulted beforehand and asked for permission, inherent in this is the possibility that they might refuse. And then where would the government be?'... (besides) the people were ignorant and once the experts had decided where a project was going to be located, there was nothing more to be said... the government was doing the adivasis a favour by uprooting them because long occupation created stagnation and stagnation was a form of death". Thus, it is common to believe that (a) affected people cannot and should not play any role in the process of planning a project – whether it should be built or not, its location and size (b) displacement is a "development opportunity" for tribal people who are backward, ignorant and stagnated. This brings us to the popular assumptions regarding tribal life, which serve as the basis of choosing and justifying a particular approach to tribal development. Anthropologists like Elwin and Furer Haimendorf, who also played a role in shaping the post independence policies regarding tribal development, stressed the strengths of tribal communities, their sustainable life style, as well as their special vulnerability. They made a case for protecting them from unbridled contact with the non-tribal society, as the contact had been largely exploitative. There were other sociologists like Ghurye who argued that tribal people were "backward Hindus" and hence they needed to be properly assimilated into the Hindu mainstream society (Ghurye, 1963). Framing the debate in mutually exclusive, polemic categories of preservation or assimilation has little relevance in understanding the reality which is much more complex. But, the old debate is revived in a case like Sardar Sarovar dam where a large number of adivasis are fighting against the mega dam. "Proponents of the dam argue that for their own good, the 'backward and savage' adivasis need to be assimilated into the modern mainstream. Under the present circumstances, adivasis are condemned to a life of impoverishment and exploitation, their salvation lies in 'emerging' from the forest and becoming a part of 'modern', developed society. Those who respect tribal autonomy and view their culture as a contested terrain where adivasis are fighting for the right to choice are accused by pro dam sociologists of wanting to preserve adivasis as museum pieces". The impact of large dams on the tribal communities, their lifestyle and identity, needs to be understood on the back drop of the long standing and yet unresolved debate about the tribal life – whether it is seen to be worthy in its own right or viewed as something inferior, worth discarding. This paper views tribal life and culture, as worthy as any other culture. Displacement cannot be a precondition for the tribal people to get access to basic public facilities like health care, education or transport. It is their right as citizens, to get these facilities wherever they are. Besides, it needs to be stressed that experience of the last 50 years has demonstrated that despite protective legislation and special constitutional provisions for tribal people, increased contact with the mainstream has alienated them from their natural resource base and its impact on tribal communities has been devastating.

TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA The Scheduled Tribes (STs) according to the 1991 Census account for 67.76 millions representing 8.08 per cent of the country's population. They are spread

across the country mainly in the forest and hilly regions. More than 70 per cent of the ST population is concentrated in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Gujarat. The essential characteristics of these communities are primitive traits, geographical isolation, distinctive culture, shyness of contact with communities at large and backwardness. The founding fathers of the Indian constitution were aware of their problems. Therefore, they made special provisions for their protection and development. The main safeguards include promotion of educational and economic interests and their protection from social injustices and all forms of exploitation. The constitution protects the general rights of all Indian citizens to move freely, settle anywhere and acquire property. It also permits the States to make reservation in public services in case of inadequate representation and requiring them to consider their claims in appointments to public services. The constitution provides special representation for the STs in the Lok Sabha and State legislative assemblies till 25th January, 2010 (Arts, 330, 332 and 334) and enjoins the setting up of separate departments in the States and National Commission at the Centre to promote their welfare and safeguard their interests (Arts 164 and 338). Special provision for administration and control of Schedule Areas and Tribal Areas (Art. 224, Fifth and Sixth Schedules) and grant-in-aid to the States to meet the cost of such schemes of development as may be undertaken by them for promoting the welfare of the Schedule Tribes or raising the level of Schedule Areas (Art. 275 (1)) are also guaranteed. Later on with a view to effectively deal with the crimes against the Scheduled Tribes two special laws, viz., Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 and the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989 were enacted. Special economic development of the Scheduled Tribes and protection against their exploitation has been an important agenda of the Government. To ensure that the constitutional mandates listed above and translated into various policies and programmes and put into effective action, high priority for the welfare and development of Scheduled Tribes right from the beginning of the First Five Year Plan (1952-57) is being accorded. Recognising their special problems the principles of *Panchsheel* have been adopted in the welfare and development of these communities so as to ensure an understanding of their culture and traditions and an appreciation of the social, psychological and economic problems with which they are faced. An important landmark was opening of 43 Special Multipurpose Tribal Blocks (SMPTBs) during the Second Five Year Plan, later called Tribal Development Blocks (TDBs), each having about 25000 people as against 65000 in a normal block. An amount of Rs.15.0 lakh per SMPTB was contributed by the Central Government. Further, an important step in this direction was taken during the Fourth Five Year Plan when six pilot projects in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa were set up in the Central sector. A separate Tribal Development Agency was established for each project and an amount of Rs.2.0 crore was allotted to these agencies. Commissions and Committees appointed by the Government to review the tribal situation brought to its notice that the percolation theory had not helped the tribals in getting their due share and the backward classes sector had substituted general sectors instead of supplementing them and viewed that much more was still needed to be done to bring up the STs on par with the general population of the country.

Tribal Sub-Plan The Fifth Five Year Plan marked a shift in the approach when the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) for direct benefit of the STs was launched. The Tribal Sub-Plan for the Scheduled Tribes was designed to channelise the flow of outlays and benefits from the general sectors in the plans of the States and Union Territories (UTs) and Central Ministries in proportion to their population both in physical and financial terms. It is an umbrella under which all schemes implemented by the States and Central Governments are dovetailed for addressing different needs of the Scheduled Tribes. It is basically an area development programme with focus on tribals under which infrastructural development and family-oriented programmes are undertaken. The strategy has been successful in garnering larger flow of funds for the development of Scheduled Tribes from Rs. 759 crore during the Fifth Five Year Plan to about Rs. 16902.66 crore by the end of the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97). The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, besides providing Special Central Assistance, which is an additive to the Tribal Sub Plan of the States and UTs and grants under Article 275 (1) of the Constitution for raising the level of infrastructure in the Scheduled Areas and economic development of the Scheduled Tribes to the level of general population, is also implementing

various Centrally-sponsored and Central sector schemes under which financial assistance ranging from 50 per cent to 100 per cent is given to the States and UTs for construction of hostels and coaching of ST students for competitive examinations, upgradation of their merit, research and training, setting up of *ashram* schools, vocational training centres, village grain banks, educational complexes for ST girls in low literacy pockets and development of primitive tribal groups. Besides, nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) have also been involved in the development of STs. Their developmental and financial needs are being taken care of over and above the credit available through priority sector lending of banks and other institutions by the NSFDC. With the prime objective of providing marketing assistance and remunerative prices to tribals for their minor forest produce (MFP) and surplus agricultural produce (SAP) and to wean them away from exploitative private traders and middlemen, the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation (TRIFED) was set up by the Government in the year 1987. The TRIFED has ensured remunerative prices for the MFP to tribals. While these achievements are a matter of some satisfaction as various development plans, policies and programmes have brought forth a perceptible improvement in the socio-economic status of the Scheduled Tribes a lot more needs to be done with concerted focus on the issues crucial to improve their status on par with the rest of the population. These are: prevention of land alienation from tribal to non-tribal, review of National Forest Policy and Forest (Conservation) Act 1980, taking into consideration symbiotic relationship the tribals are having with forest, provision of clean drinking water and medical facilities, effective rehabilitation of the tribals displaced on account of setting up of development projects and legal measures to curb the activities of money lenders and traders by effective implementation of laws and regulations. Women play a significant role in tribal society: their empowerment with upgradation of their skills is one of the issues to be addressed urgently. To look into these issues and further focus attention on the development of tribals the Government has set up separate Ministry under the charge of a Cabinet Minister. The Government is working hard towards a new social order based on social equality and social harmony.

Tribal people being the original inhabitants of India, constitute a significant part of this vast nation. They have been dwelling in the forests surrounded by hills for a long period. Their social structure, their culture and their language are quite different from the general people of India. Adivasi traditions and practices pervade all aspects of Indian culture and civilization, yet this awareness is often lacking in popular consciousness, and the extent and import of Adivasi contributions to Indian philosophy, language and custom have often gone unrecognized, or been underrated by historians and social scientists. The dynamics of change in tribal life by addressing various issues such as the concept of tribe, the tribal philosophy of life, concept of value and notion of development. Conceptualizing the Hos of Singhbhum as a tribe, the contributors discuss at length the significance of myth and rituals among the tribals, folk treatment system, dialectics of identity and assimilation, and socio-religion of the tribes. This book contains the fundamental and basic information of subject and the selection of contents makes it an appropriate textbook for the students.

More than 100 tribes across the world still live in total isolation - The Ways of the Tribe explores the diverse tribal cultures of Tanzania and in this part of the country, each with its unique language, mode of life and folklore. Laurence H. Tribe - How much of life had I missed from underplanning or overplanning? This book, Tribe of

