

# **INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

## **National Seminar on Impact of Violence in the Red Corridor on Tribal Development and Traditions**

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Venue: Conference Hall, IIPA,  
New Delhi

### **(TRANSCRIPT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF 12.3.2019 - PANEL DISCUSSIONS I AND II)**

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Chair: Shri Prakash Singh

DR. NUPUR TIWARY: Good morning. I have very senior dignitaries on the dais. This is a two-day programme under the Centre of Excellence for Tribal Research and Exploration. This has been commissioned by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and the basic mandate is to look into the systematic training and action research for various schemes of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs which are running at present – concurrent evaluation and third party evaluation. One very important area is the tribal exploration where we are looking into the atrocities and Left wing extremism, and we are also adopting some districts as per the mandate given by the Ministry. So, we just organized this two-day programme. First day was Paper presentations where we had a number of academia coming from all over India and some young scholars and also some scholars coming from very interior areas who represent the tribal population. It was a whole-day programme Chaired by very

eminent people and eminent faculties who have been into this tribal development. Today, it is two panel discussions that we are having. One is on 'Atrocities in Red Corridor and Left Wing Extremism and its Impact on Tribal Development and Tribal Traditions', and the second panel will be on 'Tribal Development and Tribal Traditions and also Cultural Expressions' where we will have professors and also the activists coming from the field. I will just read out the names of the dignitaries sitting on the dais—

Shri Prakash Singh Ji. He is a former IPS officer

Shri Ram Niwas Ji. He is also a former IPS officer, DGP, Chhattisgarh.

Shri Rakesh Ranjan Ji. He is an IPS officer and is from Niti Aayog

Ms. Maja Daruwala. She is not here, and

Brig. H.S. Walia. He is DIG, Training Centre, National Security Guard

The whole theme here is to deal with atrocities and this Panel is being Chaired by Shri Prakash Singh Ji. I will just read out a few lines about him.

Prakash Singh Ji is a retired Indian Police Service officer who rose to the highest rank of Director-General of Police. He has served as Chief of the Border Security Force (BSF), Uttar Pradesh Police and Assam Police. He is considered as one of the best police officers for his role as key architect for police reforms in India. After his retirement from service in 1996, he filed a Public Interest Litigation in Supreme Court of India. The landmark verdict of this PIL came in 2006 in which the Supreme Court has given specific directions to the Central and State Government to carry out structural changes in the police with a view to insulating it from extraneous pressures and making it accountable to the people. This is a very small profile I have read but every one knows him and people watch him on TV. For various programmes, his expertise are there. He will be Chairing the session and the modalities will be designed and devised by him,.

SHRI PRAKASH SINGH: Thank you, Dr. Nupur. It is a pleasure to be here and talking to, I would say, I suppose, some members of the faculty of the IIPA itself and distinguished scholars from different walks of life. We are here to express our

views on the impact of violence in the Red Corridor. Actually, there is nothing like Red Corridor but for our understanding, let us say areas affected by Naxal violence on tribal development and traditions - that is the subject.

Now, talking of violence, whose impact we are going to examine, we have been witnessing Naxal violence for the last more than 50 years now. Starting from a small village, almost an unknown village, at the tri-junction of India, Nepal and what is now known as Bangladesh, the movement gradually, in ever-widening circle, spread to large areas of the country and it is amazing how a movement starts from one village and then, at its peak, it affected 220 districts in 20 States of the Union,. But that was the peak time in about 2010 or so. Since then, due to the massive deployment of security forces which were ordered by Mr. Chidambaram, the then Home Minister of India and the result of successful counter-insurgency operations, the movement has now shrunk to about 90 districts in 10 States of the Union only. The Government of India's spokesmen have been claiming – I mean the Home Minister himself – that the movement is on its last legs and within another couple of years we will see the end of the movement. Not that I agree with this assessment but this is what the Government of India's spokesmen have been claiming. Now, without going into what is the future of the movement, that is beyond the scope of our discussion today, we are going to discuss the impact of whatever violence the Naxal movement has resulted in. It is a violence which has resulted from both sides, I mean, the Naxals have perpetrated acts of violence to spread their ideology and to bring about, as they said, a democratic revolution in the country, and the State Government has also perpetrated violence to put down this movement because they think that it is a challenge to the authority of the State and that violence could be countered by violence primarily and then the State violence has to be supplemented by socio-economic measures to address what was thought to be the grievances or the root causes which had led to the growth and spread of this movement.

So, what has been the impact of this violence? It is a very wide spectrum but I am sure, the distinguished panelists here would throw light on the different aspects of this violence. I will just flag some of the more obvious manifestations of violence in the region, I would again repeat, violence from both the sides. One, you could say, it has led to displacement of large populations. When there is violence, I noticed particularly during the Salwa Judum area, when villagers were grouped and stationed in particular areas, they were uprooted from their habitats. There has been massive displacement of population, partly because of violence and partly because of certain development works undertaken in the Central Indian States, I mean, you are raising a dam, you are building a power plant or you have given mining leases and all that, also it includes development. All that also led to displacement of population. Unfortunately, there is no authentic estimate about the displacement of population, but in 2008, Government of India's Planning Commission appointed an Expert Group, of which I also happened to be a member, and not that I came to this figure but in our report we mentioned it. It says: "An official database of persons displaced by projects is not available. However, some unofficial studies, particularly by Dr. Walter Fernandes pegged this figure at around 60 million" –mind you, that is a huge number, six crores people being displaced between the years 1947 and 2004. It goes on to say, "Out of this total displaced population, 40 per cent of the total displaced affected persons are tribals." Though they constitute only 8 per cent of the population but when it came to displacement, they are 40 per cent. So, that shows one of the more horrific manifestations of impact of violence, the huge displacement which has taken place.

Then, there is a question of land alienation. Now, land alienation is both the cause as well as the effect of the movement and the violence which has taken place. Basically it is more of a cause but it is also the effect. On the question of land alienation also, the picture is very heartrending. Here again, I have a report prepared by the Ministry of Rural Development It was an Expert Group which

went into the question. The paragraph is so heartrending, their findings. It says, “In the process of alienating land from the tribals, it seems to the Expert Group as if private individuals, derelict Revenue Officers, including Deputy Commissioners, unscrupulous lawyers ignorant civil courts and even the better-off tribals themselves have all joined hands as it were to deprive the tribal communities of their land.” - mind you, he is blaming the entire system, from Deputy Commissioner downwards everyone is hand in glove in this process – “|and what is worse, the long arm of the State and the forces of the rule of law have failed to prevent their degradations. Then, the second paragraph is also very moving. It says, “The process of restoration of the land of the tribal people, even when claims for restoration were filed, smacks of utter apathy and injustice. Indeed, the Expert Group finds that the process of restoration has worked against the tribals. A process that has left the tribal people totally exhausted” 0 and you can note these words: “totally exhausted, impoverished and traumatized.” So, this is another terrible phenomenon that we have been witnessing.

About forest rights, I think the speakers will throw light on that, but how in the implementation of that, the Supreme Court recently ordered eviction of tribals whose claims had not been substantiated. Of course, the order has been stayed. On this, I will just read out a poem which I have recorded in my book on the subject also. The poet is Paulus Utsi – I do not know which country he belongs to; I think some Latin-American poet. It is something like this, talking of the plight of tribals—

As long as we have waters where the fish can swim  
As long as we have land where the reindeer can graze  
As long as we have woods where the wild animals can hide  
We are safe on this earth  
When our homes are gone and our land destroyed  
Then where are we to go?

So, this is the plight of tribals which we are witnessing in the areas affected by Naxal violence because when our homes are gone and our land destroyed, then where do we go and what do we do?

Apart from these manifestations, the Naxal violence has led to aggravation of poverty, it has meant low levels of literacy, it has meant very poor health facilities being available, it has also meant that some of the primitive tribal groups or the PTGs, as they are called, which were facing extinction, they are being pushed further towards extinction. That also is something which should cause us worry.

Another phenomenon which is happening under the garb of violence is, conversions are also taking place. This is also a very terrible impact. There are child soldiers, *bal dastas*, *bal sanghams*, which have been raised by the Maoists. Ostensibly they will act as runners, couriers, watch boys, but actually these boys think that after this period of apprenticeship, as they grow up, as they become adults, they will be recruited in the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army. So, these large number of child soldiers - it was estimated some years back that their number is about 2,500 – are forcibly taken away from their families. Families are told that they have to contribute one child. So, these *Bal Sanghas* is another thing.

Then, there is the presence of women in the Naxal movement. This is also a very disturbing factor. The last estimate which I read was that about 40 per cent of the Naxal cadres are women and they are in the forefront of the fight. In almost all ambushes, there are some women who are participating in ambushing the security forces, and once you have large bodies of women, then a whole lot of other complications also happen. There have been any number of instances recorded by the police officers - I think Mr. Ram Niwas would be able to throw light on that - when these women came out with stories of their sexual exploitation and all that, stories to which the senior party cadres did not take action and things were just pushed under the carpet.

We are talking of impact of violence on tribal development and tradition. The point is, what do we understand by development? I think we need to be clear about this concept; I hope, other speakers will also throw light on this. Unfortunately, development today means better roads, more electricity, it also means perhaps a McDonalds outlet, availability of pizza, malls, etc. These things also mean development. I was reading an article on *Mainstreaming Adiwasis*. It appeared in *Indian Express* of 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2018. I will just read out:

“Whose development are we talking about, how much share of this development does a citizen enjoy, how much is the share of agricultural workers and labourers, this is ambiguous. At the foundation of this rapid development lie exploitation, oppression, dominance and inequality.”

Is this the kind of development that we are trying to bring to the tribals? Again it says:

“The attempts to make *Adiwasis* part of the mainstream are attempts to destroy their culture that is driven by hard work, collective action and cooperation.”

So, what is meant by development, I think that also needs to be understood. Here, I will make a brief mention of what Jawaharlal Nehru said, He is generally criticized these days but I think he came up with some very splendid enunciations in 1957. I will just read two sentences of his:

People should develop along the lines of their own genius and we should avoid imposing anything on them. We should try to encourage, in every way, their own traditional arts and culture.”

And then in the next sentence he says:

“Tribal rights and land and forests should be protected.”

This he said as far back as 1957. Now, whether they should be allowed to develop as per their own genius, as per their own traditions, as per their own culture or should we impose, not even Indian culture, I would say, Western culture on them? We are already getting sold out to Western culture in so many diverse

ways. So, this is also something that needs to be discussed. In this context, I will make a brief mention of a Declaration made by the United Nations in 2007. It was a Declaration on the rights of indigenous people. This Declaration set out the individual and collective rights of indigenous people as well as their rights to culture, identity, language, employment, health, education and other issues. The Declaration emphasizes the rights of indigenous people to maintain and strengthen – maintain and strengthen what – their own institutions, cultural needs and aspirations.

So, these are some of the points I have flagged and, I am sure, we will have a lot of useful discussion. The fact remains that violence has disturbed the tenor of life in the so-called Red Corridor areas or States which are affected by Naxal violence. It has caused some kind of a turmoil in the tribal society. What kind of society will finally emerge - let us hope it happens one day – once peace is restored and normal life is resumed? But the child soldiers, the women who, instead of tilling the field or doing a folk dance or engaging in some fine arts, have taken to fighting. They are part of the People's Liberation Guerilla Army. So, there is, as I said, a lot of turmoil in the tribal society, in the areas affected by violence and it has definitely disturbed the tenor of their life. Their old traditions are gradually getting obliterated. Particularly the Christian converts among the tribals are against the old traditions and the old traditions are gradually, partly as a result of conversion but more as a result of the violence, getting obliterated. Weekly markets were such an integral part but in several areas, the weekly markets are no longer taking place. So, as I said, I have flagged these issues and I look forward to a lively discussion and presentation of views by the very experienced gentlemen that we have. Mr. Ram Niwas has firsthand experience of Chhattisgarh. He was DGP there. During one of my visits, he was good enough to take me to some of the interior places. Then, Mr. Rakesh Ranjan is there. He has a very strong economics background. He is presently with the Niti Aayog. Then, we have Brig. Harinder Walia. I was happy to learn that he is doing Ph.D. in Left Wing

Extremism. So, we have very knowledgeable people and I look forward to their presentations.

I think we can take 12 to 15 minutes each and then leave at least 15 minutes for questions and answers at the end. Shall we start with Mr. Ram Niwas?

SHRI RAM NIWAS: Thank you very much, Sir. We were lucky enough to have the guidance of Sir in Chhattisgarh also when the deployment of forces was there and all actions and reactions were also there. We had a very excellent guidance and blessings of Sir also during that time. It is a very vast subject, covering all the things, so I will take a few points.

If you go to the plight of the tribals or the system of the tribals, it is a long culture, from the ancient civilization up to this phase. If you go to the Indian Independence Act, 1947 when the country got independence, in section 6(1)(a), it is given how the States will be handled - there were 11 States at that time - then section 6(1)(b) dealt with the Princely States or *Riyasatein*, and then section 6(1)(c) was dealing with the tribals. So, it was such an important subject in the minds of the foreign rulers, the Britishers also that a specific mention was there to have separate constitutional guarantees and constitutional rights for the tribals also at that very time. Out of the 11 States, seven States came to India, two States went to Pakistan, and the remaining two, that is, Panjab and Bengal were bifurcated, and also 564 *Riyasatein* were merged with India. For the tribals also we have three types of constitutional provisions, that is, for NEFA, for Baluchistan and for the Central India. So, for tribals in the Baluchistan area, tribals in the NEFA, Assam and North-Eastern area, and then tribals in Central India, three types of reports were submitted having different types of traditions, what types of culture we have to maintain, and then the Fifth Schedule came into the Indian Constitution. It is also a long story that how the reports were submitted and hurriedly they were submitted and they were accepted and then they were changed, whatever immediate political ramifications were there. Then, we have this Schedule V which deals with autonomy for the tribals. But I cannot

understand what type of autonomy they were mentioning and what type of autonomy we are having. Till now we are unable to understand what our Constitution makers and the framers were thinking about that.

Now I will come to the general view of the tribals. In the tribal areas, eco system is there. We have the tribals, we have the forests, we have the minerals, we have the Naxals and we have the Government machinery. Whatever residuary things may be there, the main things are tribals, forests, minerals and Naxals. Naxals are part of the Tribals. Our policy framers provided for the type of development we want in our police administration and in general administration also. Now, one thing is also there sociologically that if some tribals join, as we say, the mainstream, the tribal leaders and the tribal boys who come to the general scenario, they come to the services, they get higher education and then they also become part of the general society. They are not having interest in perpetuating their old tribal culture. They become part of the Western model and they also become part of the system that we should implement this model. So, this is a very sad scenario that whenever we come from that eco system, we also become part of the other side and we presume that they are also saying the same thing that if they come to the administration, they will say, we should also have hospitals and this type of things, just like AIIMS or just like a hospital in Raipur or any other place. The tribals are having their own medicinal plants and the old medicinal system. So, this is a general phenomenon which we observed during our time of the service in the tribal areas.

So, one thing is with regard to minerals and forests. In Jharkhand, all the policy makers say that all the minerals are there, whatever type of minerals we think. So, in Jharkhand or in some other States, the tribals are there, the forests are there and that is why the problem is there. Now, we have the old story that if a hen can give a golden egg, we can have daily one golden egg. But the hen owner is saying that why to have one golden egg a day, I can have all the golden eggs only in one day. That is the main problem for the tribal areas.

I can just give one example. In Bastar, Tatas had got 10,000 acres of land and SRS got 6,000 acres of land. They got it in 2003. Till now they have not done anything. Now, this Government came. I am not saying anything about any political party or about any government, but we can think that in tribal areas, the general people, other people, cannot own the land. If anybody wants land, he or she cannot get it, but how can the Tatas and the SRS and the Government do that? So, we can manipulate our laws and the rules as per our convenience. And they have not done anything in that area for the last 15 or 16 years and the land has been given back to the tribals.

Sir has mentioned about the alienation of land. It is a very emotional issue. The person who has not passed through this phase, cannot imagine the feelings of that person who was born on that land, who has tilled that land, who has acquired some fruits from that land, or who has watered that land. It is an emotional bonding. I have seen the same thing in Khargone district. When Narmada dam was constructed, 282 villages were submerged and then there was a big agitation for that. The new generation says okay, we have got the money and we can shift from that place, but the person who was born on that land and who has basically grown on that land, his emotions are different. So, this is the general view of the tribals. So, there is a reaction. Then we can say it is exploitation or we can say it is a reaction, we can say we have not developed. It is not the question of development. Development is a relative term. Whatever we may call as development, it may not be development for the Western world or it may not be development for the tribal area; it is a relative term. It may be development for us, it may not be development for others. But the feeling in the tribal areas, as Sir has also mentioned and everybody says, is, there is a policy as to what is exploitation, it should not be there, we should stop it, it is the duty of the Government machinery also. We should take minerals but it should be done in an ecological manner. It should not be that we have all the big factories and the big plants, whereby the whole ecological system is disturbed. So, this is one point. We

should take tribals and Naxals as one and the same. But if we want to control the Naxals, we have to take other factors also into account. Naxals are not our enemies. We are fighting with our own people. I will quote one example. When we carried out an operation in Narayanpur district in Abujhmad area, we deployed 4,000 people and many IPS officers and at least 105 senior officers, and that operation went on for 21 days. We had coordinated which party will pass through which range and then they will cover the entire area. We covered nearly 75 per cent of the total area. At that time, Mr. K. Vijay Kumar was the DG, CRPF, who is presently Adviser to the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, and I was DGP at that time. We went to receive the forces. Deployment of such a large number of Forces was a learning experience for me also. A few tribal boys were caught and the forces brought those boys with them. I asked one of the boys who had come with the Forces to please sit there. We offered him a cup of tea. He had traveled with the Forces during the last two and a half days and the Forces provided food and other eatables to him also. Then we asked him, 'What is your opinion about the Forces? Are you happy with the Forces because they have taken care of you during the last two and a half days?' His reaction was that 'They are our enemies. Even though they have given me food etc. but I will not have any regard for them'. See his revenge, his voice, the expression on his face in spite of the fact that he was given food and his was given every facility. It is not his fault because over the years the Naxals have brainwashed their mind that these people are our enemies. So, this type of continuous brainwashing is also there in that area. We should openly accept that it is the failure of the Government machinery also because whenever there is a violence, everybody shifts to the towns and every State official shifts to the district headquarters - forest guard, *patwari*, police constable and every other Government machinery. So, basically it has become a vacuum for the Naxals to act as per their choice. So, this is one thing which I would like to share with you.

The exploitation theory is also a relative term that sometimes the Government officials are doing their best but the other party is thinking that it is their exploitation. So, it is also a relative term. Government machinery are also trying their best but sometimes the people's expectations are also very high that they should get this thing and that thing and that thing. I will quote one story here. When I was IGP, Sarguja, there was one Naxalite, Mandeep. He was lodged in the Sarguja jail. I was also alone, so, I had talk with him in ten meetings. I asked him, 'Why don't you come to the normal life?' Then he was explaining so many grievances. Slowly and slowly, my DGP met him and then His Excellence, the Governor also met him and ultimately his opinion changed and he came back to the mainstream, and then he was instrumental in bringing the Naxals' violence down in that area. Ultimately it took us six to seven months to bring it down.

My second point is that the tribals' view is entirely different and we should respect their views, that is, the natural world view of the tribals that whatever they are thinking, we should respect their thinking, their emotions and their feelings.

Then, the third point is the policy makers from the capital of the country, from the capital of the State and from the district to the *Tehsil* headquarters. In Bastar, generally we have the opposite view. Some of our friends, when we interact with them in Bastar and those areas, they say 'the cultural arrogance of the Raisina Hills'. They quote this statement that in Raisina Hills, they think that everything is run from this place and whatever they think is correct, and not the feelings of the North-East, feelings of the Central India tribals or feelings of any other people. So, this point is also relevant because it may be my best thinking at this place, but if you go to the field for the implementation part, that may be a separate one. So, I will request the policy makers that if they can have interaction with the feelings of the people at that place, that will be helpful.

So, this is a very general view of the tribals. Then, the tribal world view, then, the policy makers' view and how to implement it, that is also practical.

Sometimes we have the best scheme but the implementation part becomes very difficult. At Salwa Judum - I will take only one minute - everybody says that in Delhi whoever I met, everybody said it was this thing or it was that thing. So many opinions were there. But there was no other option with us except to implement that thing. That was the only way by which we could control Naxal movement. Otherwise we were unable to enter into this. There were so many fall-outs of Salwa Judum. Because it was a police operation, so, so many casualties, so many bad things and so many other things were there. But it was a necessary evil. Sometimes if we have to operate the cancerous part, some part we have to lose. So, Salwa Judum was a necessary evil.

So, thank you very much, Sir, for giving me this opportunity. It is such a long subject but whatever points I have made, I think our learned scholars will think over them. Thank you very much.

SHRI PRAKASH SINGH: Thank you, Mr. Ram Niwas. May I now request Brig. Harinder Walia to express his views on the subject, 'What kind of impact violence is having on the social life and the cultural traditions of the tribals'. Brig. Walia.

BRIG. HARINDER WALIA: Thank you, Chair, and thank you Dr. Nupur for giving me this opportunity to be here this afternoon amongst you all. Within the parameters of the topic for the panel discussion, that is, the atrocities in the Red Corridor and Left Wing extremism, I will try to dwell upon certain socio-economic imbalances - we all understand what all is the problem but on certain social-economic imbalances - that are persisting and which are driving the atrocities and which are driving the movement. I will also like to say a few things about how social work interventions can help in overcoming these imbalances, thus helping the national effort towards reducing and eliminating Left Wing extremism.

Ladies and gentlemen, you are aware, you have been discussing this, you have been studying this as to what are the root causes over the past fifty years', ever since the Naxalbari incident happened, how this movement has grown into

such a big thing. You are also aware that in the past one decade or so, with various measures, schemes and acts that the Government has undertaken, for example, the Atrocities Prevention Act of 1989 etc., the situation has come down and is well under control, as the hon. Chair has said. However, how to eradicate it or how to make the situation more conducive is what we need to put our heads together on?

Some of the factors - I will not dwell on all the causes but some of the socio-economic imbalances - that I talk of, first is social inequality. You are all well aware that when inequality in any society reaches a certain point or a threshold, that is where it is no longer acceptable and it leads to widespread unrest. Now the tribals have been facing this social inequality, indignity at the hands of others, whether they are the land owners or as they perceive against the established authorities. Unless these perceptions are removed, and those perceptions will only be removed when they find that their requirements on ground are being met, this problem of social inequality is not going to change. We have abolished the *zamindari* system. Fine! But we still have upper class people, especially in Central India, totally exploiting the poor and the landless. So, this is something which is one of the main causes and needs to be addressed in the right earnest.

The second factor I would like to dwell on is the high rate of illiteracy. While national statistics are showing that our literacy rates are improving, however the literacy rates of the tribals and the downtrodden are not rising as they should have risen along with the other privileged classes. Now, if you are not literate, if the tribals or the poor or the landless do not have education, simply they are failing to take advantage of the opportunities that the development in the country is affording. So, this is the second thing which needs to be addressed. We all understand it but again it has to be addressed in the right earnest.

The third thing that I would like to dwell on - of course, it has already been covered in a big way - is the forest rights and the tribal rights. Now, gentlemen, the problem is that the tribals perceive that whether it is the Forest Act or the draft

forest policies etc., they perceive these as if these have been made to protect the forest wealth from the forest dwellers, that is, themselves. They perceive it that way. They feel that these policies and these Acts are primarily meant to protect the forest produce etc. from the actual owners or the actual forest dwellers and not from the unscrupulous contractors who are actually taking all the benefits, whether it is transshipping those forest produce and selling them in a big way with huge profit margin or whether it is deforestation etc. So, unless this is set right, I am afraid, the Forest Acts and the forest policies are not going to help in the way that the nation is looking at.

Shri Prakash Singh mentioned about the forced displacement. That is a very big factor which is leading to alienation of the tribals, the *Adiwasis* and the Scheduled Castes. Now, whether this is for earning better livelihood, whether it is to live with dignity or whether it is forced displacement, this is one major factor which is alienating these people, forcing them to support the Naxals and forcing them even to join the Naxal cadres.

The last point that I would like to make again is a well-understood point but it is the gender exploitation or the gender inequality. Now, whether it is exploitation of the women by the people who are the haves, by the upper class people, by the people who have money, sometimes even by the people who are the fossils or very rampant by the Naxal cadres themselves. Unless we address this gender exploitation, I am afraid, the problem is not going to end very soon.

Having said all this, which, to my mind, are the basic factors of social and somewhat economic imbalance, what do we do about it? We are all aware of so many schemes which are there. The Governments have pumped in schemes after schemes and, of course, they have had lot of benefits. However, the problem is implementation. Unless the schemes get implemented and benefit the right people who are supposed to be the rightful targets, they are not producing the desired results. We all understand what is the problem in implementation of these schemes. To my mind, it is sincerity, of course, and also accountability. So, to that

one thing that I have been thinking of and which can be of real help is a very intense social work intervention. Now, trained professional social workers can really help in this regard. We all understand what is community development. Trained professional social workers can be very good interface between the tribals, between the downtrodden, between the poor and the local bodies, the *panchayat* and the district level administration, they can help in raising the awareness level of the people, whether it is about population control measures, whether it is about gender protection, whether it is about the various schemes that they can make use of. Apart from raising their awareness, they can also help in guiding the people to make the best resource utilisation. The resources are there, the schemes are there, so, social work intervention.

There is another thing which is already on but is not happening. We were discussing it today. I have seen so many self-help groups being formed but they are formed and after one or odd years, this is allowed. But if social work intervention is taken in the correct manner, these kind of self-help groups can really succeed. They will firstly tell the target population what is to be done and how to run the projects. Secondly, they will act as *de facto* monitors and they will also act as forces which will force the officials to perform where they have to. If this is done, gentlemen, I think these are the efforts that are needed for eradication of Left Wing extremism, which, in turn, will happen when the atrocities and the perceived deprivation of the tribals and the *Adiwasis* and the Scheduled Castes end.

I think if these kind of steps are taken, we will move towards our aim of having our country, our nation free of Left Wing extremism sooner than later. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

SHRI PRAKASH SINGH: Thank you, Brig. Walia. May I now request Mr. Rakesh Ranjan, a former police officer, an economist, and presently associated with Niti Aayog, to throw light on the dimensions of the problem, particularly the economic and the social dimensions.

SHRI RAKESH RANJAN: Good afternoon to all of you. May I start with two personal notes. The first is that when Nupur said that I have to get invited, I said who all are coming? She said Prakash Singh Saheb will Chair it. So, I said, fine, I will come because I am a great fan of him and I think we see him as a role model in police service. So, I came to this seminar. The added advantage was when she said that lot of very intelligent people, good scholars are coming to hear me. So, it is a matter of challenge as well, but I said, fine, let me take this opportunity to speak.

The second one, which is again very personal, is that my own brother runs an NGO in Kanker district, and his wife, who is a tribal leader in Chhattisgarh, looks and works for forest rights. If I take the words of Ram Niwas Sir, it somewhere represents, what is known as, the arrogance of Raisina Hills. So, I think we generally have a huge debate with each other. One day my sister-in-law told me that 'In Dindori district, you are making a tiger reserve which is largely a Baiga reserve. Baiga tribe people are saying that in our reserve tigers are being looked after but Baiga tribe people are nowhere. So, what is more important for you, tiger or Baiga tribe? That is question number one.

In this brief interaction with you, I would like to be very provocative because I think all of you are aware of the problems involved in this and whether we look at the problem from an angle that can we provide some solution or not? So, I will, for first four or five minutes, behave like a Government spokesman and will tell you what the Government is doing and after that I will raise some of the issues because we are somewhere in between. Our Home Minister has taken a view that within two or three years, Naxalites may be on their last leg or something like that. I do not think Prakash Singh Saheb has said exactly that that he is not agreeing that the situation is completely under control, but at the same time, he raised some very fundamental issues and I want this particular august gathering to take a view on this matter that what exactly we mean by development, what have we done, have we done nothing on this or do we have to do something

and who will have to do? How long are we going to be a very paternalistic kind of thing that we will provide, or from Delhi or from Raipur or from Ranchi, who will provide for, what is known as, tribal development and all these things?

Let me first speak like a Government spokesman what the Government has in mind. There exists in the Budget, what is known as, the Tribal Sub-plan. It is never written in newspapers, sometimes only it comes what is SC/ST Sub-plan and Tribal Sub-plan. The fact remains that the Government of India, in its wisdom, has mandated a very decent percentage of the Government Budget that they should be ordinarily spent on the areas which are tribal-dominated. Now, the question is, and that is the question with the people who look after the media and look after the Constitution of the nation, there is hardly any reporting on this kind of thing because year after year, Ministries have to look at this thing that just after the third quarter of the Budget, what happens is that most of the Ministries will say that they have not been able to spend this money and, therefore, some kind of exemption is taken. Why is it that it makes no national news at all? It does not make any news that why the money meant for the budget where we wanted to have an alignment to the direction to the tribal areas could not be spent.

The second one is, I will take you to an example. What the Government of India recently tried was that let us look at the most backward districts, around 110 to 120. This exercise we did in Niti Aayog where we used data, and the result came which is not surprising to most of you but it was surprising to many of my superiors. Around 67 districts fell in three States of India, out of the 100 most backward districts. They were Bihar, U.P. and Madhya Pradesh. Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh also contributed quite heavily in this particular thing. Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs has now identified 35 districts out of 99 or something, which they feel that these are the districts which, in the last five years, have either seen the violence of the Naxals or are still affected by the threat of the Naxals. So, the Naxal-affected. influence zone is somewhat stronger than that and

have a particular programme for this, which is the successor of Integrated Action Plan where some kind of money is provided to the district administration which comprises of the District Magistrate, the Superintendent of Police and the District Forest Officer, and to provide some kind of local work. It is not governed by Delhi that what work you are supposed to do, it is supposed to come out from the ground that what work you are supposed to take up, and this is the money, around Rs.30 crore or something per year. We attempted a particular programme, what we call Aspirational Districts Programme in which finally these 35 districts from the Left Wing extremism and we picked up around 80 districts, so, 115 districts, and we felt that these are some of the poor districts in India, so let us try and improve their governance structure because in our view, money is not a major constraint, it is the failure of the governance in these kind of pockets which creates problem. Now, the issue that Dr. Prakash Singh has raised is, what exactly you mean by governance? Let me see my proposition to this. I think, Sir, we can disagree on this but let us have this proposition. What we did was, we said, look, what matters to people is, let us say, health, nutrition and Education. Ram Niwas Saheb has said that education is one of them. School education is there because it is in our greatness that we have right to school. What we have done is that we have ensured that children have reached school but what we have done is, which almost looks like the cost of that, that we have not been able to improve the learning outcome the way we wanted to improve. It has not improved at all. In think in PESA, we came around 72 out of 73. Kazakhstan was probably the last and he also protested. In our *Pratham* ranking, we keep on having the kind of very sobering data pertaining to the learning, like in class V, more than 50 per cent of the students are not able to read the class II textbooks of their own mother tongue. This happens quite regularly. It comes in every two years, the *Pratham* thing. So, what we attempted was that we said, look, we will take around 49 indicators having 81 data points. We spoke to many people. They said, perhaps the most important thing is health, nutrition and education; sixty per cent of the

weightage we will give to this particular thing. There are a large number of indicators. Then come agriculture and water resource management, financial skill and financial inclusion, skill development, and some of the basic infrastructure. We created this particular matrix and requested around 115 District Magistrates that you fill up your data. The first you will be surprised what came. Why I am flagging this issue is that if we want to improve something what is it, what template of governance, that we need to pick up. This makes some hint to it. One of the indicators is how many women have either the aided delivery or the institutional delivery. That is the first indicator. This came to us initially 700 per cent, 500 per cent, some districts around 100 per cent, 120 per cent, and we said this is a statistical absurdity. But they said, look, the persons who estimate the births in our district are different people and the persons who record the people who have arrived at the hospital or have the aided delivery are different people. So, that does not match. Therefore, we are having around 500 per cent of the institutional deliveries in a district. Now, the question that we are trying to say is that slowly, in the course of around 10 to 12 months, we have been able to rationalise this particular kind of the data that is being generated by the district administration. Of course, we are helped by the Tata Trust and Gates Foundation and they are doing this survey. They are going to the households and asking them, look, is there any improvement in the health, are the *Aanganwadi* workers coming to you four times? You must have ante-natal check four times. That is what the Government scheme says and that is what the nutritional experts tell you. Most of the deaths that take place, of the child as well as of the mother, are on the day of the birth. So, that can be handled if we have four ante-natal visits by the ANM workers. Now what we are doing is that we are requesting the District Magistrate that they are on a competition with 115 of yours. We are telling them that their percentage is this much, their region's percentage is this much, which is better than theirs, and the national percentage is this much. This has led to improvement. I am not saying everything is hunky-dory because, as I said, first five minutes I

will tell you as a Government spokesman that what is being done. You may take a position that by development we mean that we have to ask the people and we need not have an ANM visit, we need not have immunization but it has happened that in many of the villages that we have seen, there is a large amount of resistance from the people that they do not want to get immunized because they say that immunization creates some problems for them. I think there is a long-standing tradition of their not getting immunized or there is a strange kind of medical belief, and I think in many of them not very correct, that immunization may be detrimental to them. But the fact remains that all over the country we have seen that immunisation makes difference. So, if it is that immunization makes a difference, let us pose this question that if a group of tribals feels that they must not get immunized, what should we do because that is the question? Is that a development or that is not a development? Do we push it or do we not push it? Therefore, in our limited view, what we feel is that there are some broad indicators which are good for the human beings, which we can ask the tribal people. I mean, it is something that if I want to live longer, in our assumption, it is good for human being. If I want to live a healthier life, if I do not want the children to die, it is good for human being. If we want to believe in this particular logic, it is possible. If we want a good learning outcome, it is good for human being. If we want to come to this kind of thing, it is still possible to draw a dashboard on which you can look at that these are the things. We maintain the tradition and nobody is questioning the tradition. The question that we are asking is, are there certain advantages of the modern civilization which we must extend to tribals or not? That is the question that we are asking. I leave it to you to take a view on that. There are certain things which are beneficial to every human being. If we pick the indicators like that and try improve the governance, on the basis of that, try name and shame the people. A District Magistrates who is not doing his work, let us name him. I always say Mewat district, which is having a large number of population from the Muslim community, turned out to be the last in our

assessment. When we did the assessment in Mewat district, we lost Mewat among all the 150 districts that we have taken, and this has led to major thinking and churning in Mewat that why health, nutrition and education are in such a poor state? So, the governance tool, in my opinion, is that try choose correct monitoring framework which is correct indicator and after that try make the people compete with each other. Fund is not a difficulty because there is a good number of funds which are available to many of the areas. In a district, on an average, Rs.400 crore fund flows. I do not think fund is a major issue in improving the situation. But the point that I am trying to make is that it is the question of who chooses the correct monitoring indicator. If you choose the monitoring indicator, there is a problem. If you bring the arrogance of Raisina Hill and say that these are the indicators that you have to do, then I can understand there is a problem. Ask the local people, ask the local district administration what do you think is the correct thing. Make a dashboard and please compete with others. The same thing I would say about police. Ram Niwas Sir was saying exactly the same thing in the room that one Chief Minister says this is my best SP, the other Chief Minister says no, this is my worst SP. So, the question is where is your rational basis? So, why don't we create an indicator for the police effectiveness. Once in the meeting, Sir, we attempted to make police effectiveness index where we said we will have two aspects that we may take. The first aspect is what resources have been provided to the police because police cannot operate in vacuum? The second one we will say is that what is the interface with the people? I mean, they take how effective is the police or how good is the police vis-à-vis public. I mean, if somebody does the atrocities, their index should go drastically down. If some of the district administrations or the Chief Ministers are not providing vehicle to the police, their things would go drastically down. Sir, we have created an index. I have sent it to the Home Ministry but the Home Ministry is taking its own time to look into this. But the idea will be that choose the correct monitoring indicators.

One point which Mr. Walia said and I am entirely in full agreement with that, is that in our governance structure, there is one major lacuna. At the last mile connectivity, I do not think that we have been doing wonderful things. You talk to the BDO and try tell him or you talk to a local teacher or a District Education Officer or look at the Block Education Officer and speak to him and say that in your school no work is done. He will look at you surprisingly and say, yes Sir, this school is not good. It will never come to him or her that something has to be done to improve it. Now, there are two methods of doing it. One is that use technology to do that. This present Government has a lot of faith on technology that by doing geo tagging, by tweeting, by twisting, we can shame the teacher, we can do this, we can do that. That may be a good thing to do; I am not saying it is not good. So, one is technology that can definitely allow us to handle some of the problems that we feel at the cutting edge level. The other is the involvement of the community. As a block level government, I do not think you have the kind of wherewithal to go to everybody. I can have a competition-based system but then what will happen is, the Inspector will go and ask the ANM worker that look, if you do not show four visits, then your district will go down in the competition. So, what you do is that you show four visits. So, if you push certain things and try reward the district or try reward the people on the basis of performance in terms of competition, the problem of fudging of the data starts. So, the question that I ask, and the question is from the scholars from the civil society, from others, is, why don't we create the index, why don't we report this index, why don't we name and shame the district, if there are atrocities, why don't we write and write and write against it? There are people who are there to look into this. So, I do not think we have raised enough heat on this. We do not have a rational basis. A beginning can always be made. In Aspirational Districts Programme, we have done this beginning for the district. I am sure, other people have also tried, but this time we are trying with much greater vigour. As a Government spokesman I

say that. But at the same time, I feel that it is possible to improve the governance with the given resources only if we put our system correct.

That is all, Sir. Thank you.

SHRI PRAKASH SINGH: Thank you, Mr. Rakesh Ranjan. We have heard three valuable presentations. We have heard Mr. Ram Niwas talking of his experience in Abujhmad, telling us how tribal children get brainwashed and even when they are looked after by the security forces, they still consider them their enemies. He was absolutely bang on target when he said that we must respect the thinking of the tribals on different issues. In this context, he also drew attention to, and I think very rightly, what people in the field consider cultural arrogance of Raisina Hills. Sitting here in Delhi, in North Block and South Block, people do not really get to understand the problems of the tribal areas. Recently somebody told me that Sir, just see, this person is working as Joint Secretary, Tribal Affairs in the Home Ministry and till today he has not seen any State affected by Left Wing extremism. He has never gone on the ground and he is working as Joint Secretary! This is how the Government is running the administration. Anyway, I just listened to him. I am not part of the governance now, so, I just took note of it.

About Salwa Judum, I did not speak at length but I had the occasion and the opportunity to study this on ground and I felt that it was a genuine movement which is maligned by the human rights groups. The fact of the matter is that the NHRC had commissioned a study on Salwa Judum and they praised it as a people's movement against the Maoist movement. It is an established principle of counter insurgency that if there is insurgency, then apart from whatever measures you take at the force level, at the Government level, at the administrative level, people must be with you, people must rise against the forces of insurgency. Once that happens, then the insurgency is going to be knocked out, and Salwa Judum was an attempt to mobilize people against Naxal violence. But human rights groups have maligned it and the Supreme Court, I am sorry to say, played into their hands and they said no, this has to be abolished.

Brig. Walia drew our attention to socio-economic imbalances and he made pointed references to inequality, illiteracy and gender exploitation. These factors are definitely valid but I would say that the causes of Naxal movement go much much deeper because we have these problems in, I would say, even a place like Eastern U.P., which is very backward. We have inequality, we have illiteracy but then you do not have Naxal movement. Some more additional inputs are required for that. I would not have time to go into the details of it. But he was absolutely right when he said that some kind of monitors at the field level are required, provided we appoint them properly because here all appointments get vitiated. We know how difficult it has been to recruit even a constable by a transparent process. In U.P. it became an industry. I mean, the people in power then, not the present Government, but the people then made it that okay, you will have to pay Rs. four lakhs, or okay, you belong to our caste, so paying Rs.2 lakh also will do. So, if you take Rs.2 lakh, Rs.3 lakh or Rs.4 lakh from one candidate like this and if you are recruiting 20, 30 or 40 thousand people, then you just calculate and see how many thousands of crores of rupees scandal it was. So, appoint of monitors can be helpful but the point is what kind of monitors we have, who is going to ensure that they are good monitors? It is a huge problem. See, even *Lokpal* is not getting appointed. Everyone thinks that if the *Lokpal* is to be appointed, he should be our man. In State Security Commission, Supreme Court said you take 50 per cent from the civil society who are honest, who have had an unblemished record, and half you take from the Government. Now, those who are being taken from the civil society, they are the ones who have been sycophants of the Government. So, the matter ended there itself. Then where will the objectivity come from? So, appointment of monitors is theoretically a good concept but how do we go about it?

Mr. Rakesh Ranjan educated us about the Tribal Sub-plan. He talked about the Integrated Action Plan. Integrated Action Plan really worked well on the ground. I am aware of it. If we have a dedicated team of District Magistrate,

Superintendent of Police and the District Forest Officer, they were given funds and they were told 'You have to develop your area with this fund'. There was no difficulty. They had got the money. Three persons were sitting and between the three, they balanced each other and the money was properly utilized.

Mr. Rakesh Ranjan raised a very pertinent point that which aspects of civilization should be extended to tribal areas. Now, this is a subject on which there can be long long discussion as to which aspects of modernity or civilization or progress, as we call it, should be extended to the tribal areas. I will just give a small anecdote from my own experience. I was in the interior areas of Jharkhand and I was talking to a group of tribals. It was a PTG group which is generally on the verge of extinction. I talked to them at length. They were talking in Gondi. Of course, I had a proposal with me. This is a long story but I will cut that long story short. the sum and substance of that man who was talking to me said: "Sir, see, we do not want anything else, we just want a school and a hospital, school so that our child gets education there, and hospital because, he said, Sir, see, when someone in our family falls sick, what we do is we lay him on a cot, four persons lift him on their shoulders and then take him to the nearest hospital. Sometimes we keep walking till evening but we are not able to reach the hospital. Then we spend the night in some village and next day again we start moving. Often it so happens that by the time we reach the hospital, that person has died. For two days we have been walking with that man on our shoulders and by the time we reach the hospital, that person has died. So, if not a hospital, at least a Primary Health Centre can be there so that we get at least some first aid, some treatment, some medicines." I mean, these two aspects every villager wants. He is not bothered about other aspects of development that he should get a mobile phone also and electricity also. Without that also they are able to manage. They are able to manage with a lamp or whatever solar light they get during day time, that is sufficient for them. During night they can sleep without that also. They have no night life, they don't have to attend some party during night time and they do not

have to have some liquor party during night. Of course, they take liquor but they drink it at home and then they go to sleep. Even that does not go beyond a limit. I remember, once I was in a village when I was in Nagaland for four years. Incognito I went to that village because if they knew who I was, probably I would not have come back alive. In the night they offered me *madhu* (rice beer). What I understood there for the first time was that your mug of *madhu* cannot remain empty. I thought let me finish it and then get rid of it. But hardly had it been finished that the girl filled the mug again. I was in a great difficulty. I did not know what to do. I was told that they cannot keep the mug half empty. Then I started taking sips slowly slowly and somehow escaped from that situation. So, what I am telling is, *madhu* is taken everywhere. Anyway, actually, I was talking of which aspects. So, education and medical facilities are two things which people really want even in the most interior areas. Yes, then we should have some index. Just as we are monitoring different districts on *Swachh Bharat*, why can't we monitor different districts on police or the administration as a whole that this is a good administered district. It may be difficult to say that this is the best administered district but we can say that this district is in A band or A category – top level – this district is in B category, which is lower than A, and this district is in C category, which is still lower than B, so that at least you can say with a sense of pride that 'I belong to A band or A category of districts'. This sort of thing can go a long way.

Well, we have heard these learned speakers. Now, I would say, the subject is thrown open to discussion. You can ask any question on the subject. You can name the speaker or you can just mention it that whosoever wants can address it. But be very brief. Let it be a question and not an expression of your views on the subject because then we would not have time for others.

QUESTION: Thanks a lot, distinguished Panel, for enlightening us. I have two things to know your opinion on. One is, how about having Government

interlocutor, like we had recently a former IB Chief for Jammu and Kashmir? Like that, we can have a Government interlocutor for Left Wing extremist areas.

Second thing is, you have Cobra Battalion for resolute action in such areas. How about having the same kind of force for peace-keeping or developmental activities?

SHRI PRAKASH SINGH: On interlocutor, let me tell you, at different periods of time, efforts have been made to have peace talks with the underground extremists. I remember, in the undivided Andhra Pradesh, in Hyderabad, two rounds of talks were held. A friend of mine, also a police officer, K.V. Ramarao, was part of the negotiating team from the Government side and the Naxals had also come and there was a lot of hype over the meetings between the two groups. But at the end of it, Ramarao told me personally that look, we kept on cornering them that you specify your demands, what are your demands. They would just go round and round that we want a democratic revolution. But what do you mean by democratic revolution? You tell us one, two, three; what exactly you want. The only point they came down to was 'land reforms', that land reforms should be there. Yes, land reforms should be there. There is no doubt about that. But what exactly should be the land reform? How much should be the land holding, what should be the pattern. Ultimately they came to the conclusion that they had come to peace talks just to buy time. For some time there should be ceasefire so that their underground workers come over-ground, they should have some breathing time and in the mean time they should be able to collect some more funds and recruit new cadres. Then they looked for an excuse. There was an encounter between the police and the Naxals. So, they said, "No, you are not serious about peace talks, so we are walking out". By that time they had enough breathing time. When Mr. Chidambaram was the Home Minister, he also made some overtures to the Naxals. He said, you tell me and within 48 hours I will respond. There was no response to that also. Basically, there intentions about peace talks are always suspect and as someone who has served in the Government, who has dealt with insurgent groups

in different parts, in Nagaland, in Assam, Punjab Kashmir, I would say that the only time which is ripe for making an offer for peace talks is when you are dominating. When you are dominating, then if you make an effort of peace talks, then it has credibility and there is a chance of their genuine acceptance. If it is a one-all kind of a match or both sides are at equal level - today we have killed, tomorrow you have killed, then we ambushed and then you killed our four persons, if it is going on like that - then you take it that they will be non-serious. And if they are dominating, then they will never come for peace talks. But I have always said that this is the right time to take sincere initiatives to have some kind of an interaction, some kind of peace talks. But somehow, there does not seem to be any such initiative from the Government side. There should be some initiative from the Government side. I had written an article on this very issue that this is the right time to extend the olive branch and let us see what their response is. But the Government also is in a stage of complacency. The Home Minister has been tutored. He is a simple man. Whatever the bureaucrats say, he accepts it. If they say 'Now it is a matter of three years, Sir, and they will be finished completely, what is the need for talking to these people', so, the Home Minister also says it will be over in three years. It will never end. I can give it in writing because I have been following this movement not from today but since 1967. When I was a young officer in IB, I was given time to study this movement, and since then I have been following it. Twice there were occasions when the Government thought that the movement is finished, we have squashed it, demolished it, finished it, disintegrated the movement. Twice it happened so. Government was twice under that illusion but both the times the movement got resurrected because we did not address the root causes of the problem. Those remained. Security forces alone cannot solve the problem for you. They can give you a breather, they can create a situation where you can go to the root of the problem and then be done with it. But the problem is, in the Government also – I am sorry to say this because I have been part of the system – I know there is so much intellectual dishonesty, what to

say अभी थोड़े दिन पहले मैं एक टी.वी. शो देख रहा था। ऐसे ही एकदम से मेरी टी.वी. पर नजर चली गई। झारखंड के गोड्डा में अदाणी का पावर प्लांट लग रहा है। टी.वी. में यह दिखाया जा रहा है कि अदाणी के आदमी गाँव में गए हैं, एक गाँव वाले से बात कर रहे हैं और यह टी.वी. ने कैप्चर कर लिया है। जो बातचीत है, वह कुछ इस तरह से है। अदाणी का आदमी कह रहा है कि तुमको जमीन देनी पड़ेगी और अगर जमीन नहीं दोगे तो हम तुमको जमीन में गाड़ देंगे। वह ऐसी धमकी गाँव वाले को दे रहा है। वह गाँव वाला बाद में रो-रो कर टी.वी. चैनल वाले को अपनी गाथा सुना रहा है। ऐसा क्यों हो रहा है? अब यह हुआ कि अदाणी के आदमी को तो झारखंड के मुख्यमंत्री भी नहीं रोक सकते। एक तरफ तो झारखंड में सारंडा फॉरेस्ट है, सारंडा फॉरेस्ट को, उन दिन यूपीए की सरकार में जयराम रमेश जी थे और जयराम रमेश जी बार-बार सारंडा जाते थे और उन्होंने बहुत भावुक बयान दिए थे। उनका एक बयान बहुत अच्छा था और वह दिल को छूने वाला बयान था। उन्होंने शायद यह कहा था कि जब मैं मरूँ तो मैं चाहता हूँ कि यहीं पर मुझे जलाया जाए। ऐसा कुछ बयान उन्होंने कहा था, *So, he got so involved with Saranda.* सारंडा को सिक्युरिटी फोर्स ने ऑपरेशंस करके क्लियर कर दिया। क्लियर करने के बाद होना क्या चाहिए, *administration should move in.* एक वैक्यूम था, जहाँ एडमिनिस्ट्रेशन जाए और गवर्नेंस इम्प्रूव करे। गवर्नेंस और डेवलपमेंट, दोनों में कनफ्यूज मत करिएगा। हमें 24 घंटे, 365 दिन अच्छी गवर्नेंस चाहिए। अच्छी गवर्नेंस से मतलब है कि सरकार ईमानदार हो। अभी मैंने आपको *child alienation* का एक गवर्नेंस का नमूना बताया, जहाँ डिप्टी कमिश्नर, पटवारी और बीडीओ सभी को प्लानिंग कमीशन का एक्सपर्ट ग्रुप चोर कह रहा है। अगर गवर्नेंस ठीक हो, संवेदनशील हो, *I mean it should be sensitive, it should be responsive, it should address people's grievances. If that happens, then these things will not happen.* मुझे क्षमा कीजिए। पीस टॉक से कहाँ हम पहुँच गए? पीस टॉक्स होनी चाहिए, पर उसके लिए अभी गवर्नमेंट की तरफ से कोई इनीशिएटिव नहीं है और नक्सलियों की तरफ से कोई पहल नहीं है।

QUESTION BY SHRI N.V. SINGH: Mr. Chairman, you made very thoughtful observations. Do you think that the real solution would come from the civil society rather than from the Government. The real solution can come only from the civil society. You rightly referred to the Salwa Judum movement that developed and you appreciated that it was a very positive and hopeful instrumentality, but it was spoiled by the Government by co-opting Salwa Judum movement leaders as police officers. The Government tried to policise it, if I may use the word, the Government tried to turn the movement into police force and the Supreme Court rightly stopped it. You criticized the Supreme Court for stopping it but the Supreme Court rightly stopped the governmentalisation of the civil society

organization. The Supreme Court did not condemn the Salwa Judum, it only stopped the Government from making them police officers, which was an absolutely wrong step. I am saying it because I was in a school that was in an interior village in Bihar, which was set up by the local community. The local community managed the school and it became such a good school that even the parents from district town started sending their children to the school hostel in the village, and once the Government took it over, it has become an absolutely useless school.

SHRI PRAKASH SINGH: Your first question was whether initiative can come from civil society. I entirely agree with you. We need genuine, sincere, enlightened citizens who understand the nuances of the problem. If they come forward, there is a fair chance that their efforts would make a dent, would make a headway whether finally peace prevails or not, it is difficult to say. We had a very enlightened retired IAS officer, Mr. Shankaran. There was a committee of concerned citizens formed in Hyderabad. He was heading that committee. But at one stage he also got disillusioned and he told me while talking, Prakash, I think they were “using” me – using within quotes. But nevertheless, the fact remains that initiative from civil society has a greater chance of success than by use of force.

About Salwa Judum, I would reserve my comments because it is a different subject by itself. I will just very briefly, in one sentence, tell you that Salwa Judum had its inherent value. it was a good counter-insurgency measure, but unfortunately, members of the Salwa Judum started abusing their powers and that brought them into disrepute which was exploited by the human rights lobbies to tarnish their image, and the Supreme Court then banned it. I leave it at that.

Next question

QUESTION: *Jai Hind*, Sir. According to NIA report and the Government multi-disciplinary group fighting back Naxalism, it is stated that the Naxal leaders or the Maoists’ leaders own large properties in lakhs and cores of rupees. So, is it not

something like the Naxal groups have turned towards a political tool today in our country?

Secondly, Sir, why don't we look out for the intermediaries who are providing latest arms and ammunitions, like mortars, insas, etc. to these terror groups in India, and Sir, what have we done so far to counter our officials? It is true that corruption is the root cause that we are not yet succeeding, instead of making false statement that in the coming two years, three years or four years, let us say, infinite years, we will be able to achieve success.

SHRI PRAKASH SINGH: I think you have asked a sufficient number of questions.

QUESTIONER: Sir, only three questions I have asked. One last question is that we are doing enough for the tribals in South Africa in competition with China. So, why are not we doing that thing which we are doing in South Africa for tribals, for our tribals in India?

SHRI PRAKASH SINGH: It is a fact that the vast funds collected by some Naxal leaders have corrupted them and they are sending their children to expensive schools, they have bought real estate. It is true of Hurriyat leaders also, it is true of all insurgent movements. Once you have a lot of money, there is a human tendency to divert it and siphon it for personal aggrandizement.

Intermediaries, yes, action should be taken against them. We should be able to identify them.

Corruption, yes, it is one of the causes which is detracting our effectiveness in tackling the problem. Corruption is a cause and it also affects our attempts to resolve it.

About South Africa, that is a different picture. अब वहाँ जाकर तो आप गलत काम नहीं कर सकते, साउथ अफ्रीका आपको निकाल देगा। वहाँ तो आप ट्राइबल्स की भलाई के लिए ही काम करेंगे। अगर यहाँ भी ट्राइबल्स की भलाई के लिए सरकार ईमानदारी से काम करे तो हालात सुधर सकते हैं।

QUESTIONER: सिक्थोरिटी फोर्सेज के atrocities को कैसे रोकेंगे?

SHRI PRAKASH SINGH: देखिए, सिक्योरिटी फोर्सेज अट्रॉसिटीज यदा-कदा जरूर करते होंगे, लेकिन यह अट्रॉसिटीज ज्यादातर तभी होते हैं, जब उनका खुद का कोई न कोई जवान बुरी तरह से मारा गया है या उसके साथ बहुत बुरा व्यवहार होता है। फोर्सेज में बड़ी camaraderie होती है, एक भाईचारे की भावना होती है। अब जैसे उनके अत्याचारों की बात सुनिए। एक आदमी को मारकर उन्होंने जमीन पर लिटा दिया, उसके बाद उसका पेट चीरकर उसमें Explosives डाल दिए और उसके पेट को सिल दिया। उसको ऐसी पोजिशन में लिटा दिया, उसे पेट के बल लिटा दिया कि जैसे ही कोई उसे उठाने आएंगे, घिसने और उठाने की प्रक्रिया में वह एक्स्प्लोसिव फूटेगा और जो उसे उठा रहा है, वह भी मारा जाएगा। अत्याचार दोनों तरफ से होता है, लेकिन मैं अत्याचार को जस्टिफाई नहीं कर रहा हूँ। Our security forces have to be held accountable. There should be in-built mechanisms and whatever complaints are brought to the notice, they should be taken cognizance of and duly inquired into because security forces cannot afford to indulge in atrocities, specially when you are fighting with your own men, your own people. So, they have to be disciplined and they have to fight within the limits of law and they have to be held accountable as and when anything goes wrong.

QUESTION: My question is to Rakesh Ranjan Sir. Sir, you said about indicators. What is your view about democracy index – it is an indirectly related question – where we can register all the protests and the demonstrations because agitation politics is also a part of democracy, so that agency-wise, territory-wise or State-wise we can specify it? What are your views, Sir?

SHRI RAKESH RANJAN: So far it is quite a challenge to make an indicator. Index is not an easy thing to do. First, it involves the kind of objective and whom you want to do what. Our view at present in Niti Aayog is that let us identify some of the very important key players in the governance set up. I entirely agree with Prakash Singh sahib that development and governance are two different things. Let us identify the most important thing which is there. We felt that health, water, school education, ease of living and development of the backward area, these five or six, in our opinion, are very important indicators where the incidence of competition - because every indicator gives rise to competition – may fall on the

officers or on the institution which is in a position to react. Suppose you make the incidence fall on District Magistrate. District Magistrate can definitely change his or her style of functioning or the kind of prioritisation of the functioning to make a major change. My answer to how do you stop police atrocities is that if you try to provide a dashboard and provide an indicator that every atrocities put your district down considerably, I think there will be inbuilt mechanism to at least discourage. We cannot look at the passion-based kind of atrocities where my own men have been killed and I go and do a lot of things in the village. But a good number of atrocities will stop indeed. So, on democracy, it is a very vital subject.

QUESTION: Restricted to only health and education, that is what I am asking. You said in 35 districts. There are other districts and other areas also.

SHRI RAKESH RANJAN: We do not have the data for the district. We have a long journey to make. Many matured democracies say that if your data is collected at the ground level, it configures at the national level, or at the federal level in our case. But in our case what happens is that over the years what we have found is that a good number of data collected remain at the district level or remain at the block level and do not get configured. We have to institute surveys, like on national health and family welfare survey or, for that matter, census. So, from time to time, we institute surveys. But we dream of a day when data is collected at the ground level in a better manner and gets configured at the Central level. It is only then that you can use all the modern tools of technology, which is like artificial intelligence and all these things. You need to have a horizontal and vertical data for that. So, that is the point. So, for any index, like democracy index, like my friend has created, what is known as the governance index, the question is, I put a governance index and say, look Bihar, you are very poor in governance. They will say so: Yes, we know that we are poor in governance. But if I tell them that look, on the matter of conservation of water or on the matter of ground level water treatment, you are very poor, then I think the action is far more direct on that. So, it is not a very great idea of having a very large set of index.

Otherwise, UNDP always has human development index, why don't we look at that?

CHAIRMAN: One last question.

QUESTIONER: My question is to Mr. Rakesh Ranjan. The question is in two parts really. One is, how would you respond to the criticism that there are actually far too many policies which are reactionary and not proactive, and the second is, is there anything in the works, say, something similar to the 2006 Draft Tribal Policy that is being envisioned by the Niti Aayog or by any other body that you are aware of, which is in the form of perhaps legislation and not policy?

SHRI RAKESH RANJAN: If you are saying that we have far too many policies, tell me the example. I do not think that we have a problem of coherence of policy. The problem is how do we implement at the ground level. It is that. Do we have a contradictory policy, I mean, except for the Supreme Court case on the eviction of the tribal which I can see that both sides have a very contradictory and adversarial position.? But other than that, do you think that we have a kind of incoherent policy? If you make out there is an incoherent policy, please write to us or to the Tribal Affairs Ministry. They should be able to change that.

QUESTIONER: Sir, my second question was on the Draft National Tribal Policy.

SHRI RAKESH RANJAN: The basic assumption that we know answers to all the question is wrong. Had I known the answer, we would have done this thing.

CHAIRMAN: Absolutely the last question now.

QUESTION BY A LADY PARTICIPANT: Sir, we have many policies, programmes and schemes from Central and State Governments as well. After listening to Rakesh Sir, it was like yes, there are many things and if it is implemented in these ways, okay, the problem can be sorted out? But if we are talking of international things, don't you think it is like moving to the shoot, instead of moving to the root?

ANSWER: If I want you to dream, what is it that you will dream? Suppose you are the goddess and whatever you do, happens. What is it that you want to happen

in this world in terms of aborigines? If you can say that and you say that our policy is not coherent with that, then I think we can have a starting point. But why do I bother about international recognition of anything?

LADY QUESTIONER: No, we often talk about international. So, why don't we concentrate and find solutions and ways to implement it at our level, instead of just moving out and seeing what the world is doing?

SHRI RAKESH RANJAN: I am not saying international.

LADY QUESTIONER: You are not talking but currently we are talking that these things are there. Yesterday we were dealing with this topic. That is why I am asking this.

DR. NUPUR TIWARY: You can always mail to us and find it out. I will forward those things to you.

So, it was a very interactive and very informative session, I would say. Shri Prakash Singh Sir and all the dignitaries sitting as Panelists, Ram Niwas Sir, Rakesh Ranjan Ji and Hirendra Walia Ji and also the participants took very keen interest in listening and reacting to that. The other day we had called N.C. Saxena Ji for some programme. He is also somehow associated with the Centre of Excellence of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and he was sharing some of the views how displacement is more of an emotional cause, like in many of the tribes, in Gond tribe and all, a girl, before she is married to a boy, is actually married to a tree, like *mahua* tree or some other tree, and that she takes the pledge that she will save that tree throughout her life. The other thing is, we were talking of medicines. The Centre is also working on tribal medicine. वास्तव में मॉडर्न मेडिसिन की बहुत जरूरत है। अगर आप झारखंड में जाएं, तो जैसे वहाँ ये लाल चींटियों को जलाकर खाते हैं। ये इनके लिए बहुत न्यूट्रिशियस होती हैं। उसके अलावा यह मलेरिया में बहुत असर करता है। इस तरह की चीजें हैं। We also talked on governance issues, how sensitive those are. Of course, as you have talked about Raisina Hills, we have been dealing with all this. पेसा एक ऐसा कानून है, जिसके लिए बी.डी. शर्मा जी ने अपनी नौकरी भी त्यागी और पूरी लाइफ वे बस्तर में रहे। काफी मेहनत के बाद, बहुत सारे लोग

थे, भूरिया कमेटी थी, बी.डी.शर्मा थे, मुंगेरकर कमेटी थी, राघव चंद्रा, आदि सात-आठ कमेटी रिपोर्ट्स इस पर आयीं। वर्ष 1996 में यह पेसा कानून आया। जितने सारे आप प्रश्न पूछ रहे हैं, Whatever that you are asking about cultural and educational, for all these *gram sabha* is the most popular place. It is just the provisions of Panchayat Extension to the Scheduled Areas Act. We are not talking all about *panchayati raj* system, elected representatives, we are talking of *gram sabha*, absolute direct democracy. But today, after 20 years also, no State has the audacity to implement it even partially. अभी उसमें नेशनल कमीशन ने सिर्फ पाँच प्रोविजन्स लिए, जिन्हें प्रेसीडेंट की रिपोर्ट में डाला गया, लेकिन उस पर भी कोई कार्यवाही नहीं हुई है। Yes, it is an important issue because this revolt or whatever it is, is not a new thing. 1831 Kol mutiny, 1850, these are just names that we are talking of, in 1835 Khonds tribe, Santhal, Bhil, lots of things are there. This is not something that is happening today. It first started around 1757. The most important thing that I wanted to ask was, Sir, that how do you identify a person is a tribal or a person is a Naxal? Of course, we do not have as much experience as you have but from the studies that we have conducted for four years, five years, we went up to Indrawati river, Dantewada, Bastar, Khunti, Arki, Arania, we went to all these places, but how do you identify whether this man is a tribal or a Naxal, and how Government is finally repatriating those tribals or those Naxals who have surrendered? There are many issues which have not been taken care of. जहाँ सैटलमेंट हुई थी, जहाँ पर सरेंडर कैम्प में गईं थी, वे खुद प्रिजनर्स की तरह ठहरे हैं। एक छोटा सा कमरा दिया जाता है, जिसमें पीछे खिड़की नहीं होती है और आगे वह कमरा एक हाल में खुलता है और 15-20 परिवार एक छोटे से हॉल में रहते हैं। उनके बच्चे वहीं होते हैं, पूरी लाइफ वहीं रह रहे हैं। यह बहुत बड़ी बात है कि उन्हें पुलिस में जगह दी जाती है, लेकिन वे वापस अपने गांव नहीं जा सकते हैं, क्योंकि उन्हें मार दिया जाएगा, because the moment they are out of the camp, they will be shot down. They are not incentivised enough. Maybe, I may not be the right person to say that but whatever little experience I have got, these things came to our notice. So, सिविल सोसाइटी ट्राइबल्स में बिल्कुल ही डेवलप नहीं है। किसी जमाने में यह हुआ करती थी, अभी के समय में यह बिल्कुल ही नहीं है। At a certain different level, maybe these

are the important issues. But I thank all of you for sharing your experiences with us. Even your coming here is a big privilege for all of us. Thank you.

We have some mementos; we just wanted to give them to you.

**(MEMENTOS WERE PRESENTED TO SHRI PRAKASH  
SINGH, SHRI RAM NIWAS, SHRI RAKESH RANJAN AND SHRI  
HARINDER SINGH WALIA)**

**(LUNCH BREAK)**

**(AFTER LUNCH)**

**Panel Discussion II: ‘Protection of Tribal Traditions and Cultural Expressions.**

Chair: Prof. Anand Kumar  
Jawaharlal Nehru University

DR. NUPUR TIWARY: We can start the session on ‘Protection of Tribal Traditions and Cultural Expressions. We know how sensitive this whole area is. We have Prof. Anand Kumar from Jawaharlal Nehru University and also we have Prof. Savyasaachi who is from Jamia Millia Islamia. Prof. Anand Kumar is a retired Prof. of Sociology from Jawaharlal Nehru University.... He is M.Phil. from..... and PhD. From Chicago University. He has lectured vastly at BHU and was also Associate Professor and then Professor, Sociology since 1981 at Jawaharlal Nehru University. He taught as India’s Chair in Germany. .... We are here to hear the Professor’s views on this particular area. This is a very brief profile that I have given.

Prof. Savyasaachi at present is working as Professor, Sociology, at Jamia Millia Islamia. The main important area of his specialization is, he has been dealing with tribal-related issues like tribals and forest dwellers. He has also worked on PESA.....

Prof. Anand and Prof. Savyasaachi have vast experience on the whole cultural aspects and other areas that we are going to get their expertise on, as they have an intense understanding of these issues.

I request the Chair to conduct the whole proceedings.

**(PL. INCORPORATE THE OPENING REMARKS AS  
RECORDING FOR THIS PORTION IS NOT AVAILABLE  
AND ALSO ELECTRICITY WENT OFF**

## **FOR SOME TIME)**

PROF. ANAND KUMAR: Friends, I am very thankful to Prof. Nupur Tiwary and IIPA for giving me this opportunity of joining all of you, to engage with many of the experts who understand the impact of violence in the Red Corridor, particularly in the context of tribal development and traditions. I am very happy to preside over this session where Prof. Savyasaachi, my dear friend and colleague and a well-known name in the field of tribal studies and a major resource person is present. Sometimes in a seminar, there is a crowd of experts and you have to make all your points in a very compact timeframe, and you always feel that oh, there was this question or this statement which I could have clarified but the tyranny of time did not permit you to do that. Luckily, this session has been spared because we have a little more time than usually it would have been because there are only four or five experts to deal with the issue in 45 minutes. So, I would first invite Prof. Savyasaachi to make his presentation on traditions and culture of tribals, a task which is commanded by his heart. He is a man who is passionately involved and it is reflected in his publications and he has been teaching at Jamia Millia Islamia for so many years. I hope, you will have enough understanding to ask questions. You can also ask questions from the previous sessions because he is not confined only to traditions and culture, he has a good grip over the political economy as well as political sociology and political anthropology of this part of the country which is generally, for convenience sake, called tribal India. Prof. Savyasaachi.

PROF. SAVYASAACHI: Thank you very much, Prof. Anand Kumar. It is really a great opportunity to have so much time to speak on this topic because it is a topic which is very complex. By complexity I mean that there are multiple sub-texts to the issues involved here and what I would like to do is to try and open up as many sub-texts as possible in order that you may understand the complexity of this issue.

First and foremost, I want to say that when we talk of the Red Corridor and when we talk of spiraling violence, we need to understand how much deep into time is this question with us and correspondingly the depth of time will also indicate to us the depth of its impact on the culture as well. Things that are peripheral, which have not been there for long durations seem to be impacting us peripherally but issues that have been with us for more than two generations, correspondingly the impact is going to be deeper. So, a brief history of what I think are the layers that have got into creating the Red Corridor, are, I think, in place.

I think the history of the Red Corridor goes back to 1935 when, for the first time, the British Government actually made the excluded and partially-excluded areas as a separate constituency where tribal people would be isolated in order that they may be given the necessary education, the necessary inputs so that they are prepared to benefit from fruits of modernity and development. An important thing to remember here is that when these two legislations were made by the British, prior to that - this is on record - 119 peasant/tribal rebellions have taken place – one per year. This is on record by Ranjit Guha in his very good book called *Elementary Structures of Peasant Insurgency in India*. So, 119 tribal protests prompted the British Government to create these areas so that they could be quietened. So, there are two different faces of this legislation that we need to understand. First is that which the colonial rule actually said what its purpose was, and the said purpose was that these people are backward, these people are primitive, these people are illiterate, these people are not ready to take the goods and services of what modernity has to offer. This is the discourse on the surface. The under-text of the discourse is that they were quite sick and fed up of tribal rebellions for 100 years, one rebellion every year on an average, 119 rebellions on record, which prompted them to put them into this pocket. If you look at the sub-text, then this legislation is meant for countering insurgency only, and the surface text is that we want to bring them up in order that they may develop. So, there are

already two different texts, two different layers of understanding that are there at the very beginning when the Red corridor begins to start to form.

Then come the Constituent Assembly debates. In the Constituent Assembly debates, we take both these legislations lock, stock and barrel with some modifications and convert them into the Fifth and Sixth Schedule Areas, and then we say that these legislations are now meant for tribal development. The original intention of the Excluded and Partially-excluded Areas Act was not modified. The reason is because they took all the legislations lock, stock and barrel, absolutely everything with some modifications, and this is all documented in the Constituent Assembly debates. So, the original intention continues and a new narrative of development is added to it in the Constituent Assembly debates and India begins to launch these two Schedules as the way in which *Adiwasis* and tribals can be made a part of the larger society. What do these Schedules actually do? What is the notion of development and what is the notion of tradition that these Schedules actually put forward? Development means going to school, very simply put, getting water by the tap, getting medical facilities in order that mortality rates might be reduced, and with good medical facilities and good education, you participate in the job market and avail of all the goods and services that you think you should have in order to become the citizens of modern India. This is what we know of development. So, when we talk of education, right from the beginning, the language of the people was never an important component in imparting education. So, when a young *Adiwasi* goes to school, the first thing that he is taught is to forget the language that he speaks at home. That is the first thing that he is taught. And then, when he goes to school, by the end of his school tenure, he has forgotten his language in public discourse; his language is now confined only to domestic domain and to that particular sphere of life and the entire new fields of life that have been opened for him, which is, the job market, interaction with Government officials, interaction with outsiders. There he uses a completely different language. This is the first aggression on the culture of the people and this

was the basis of development and this continues till today. The first and the most traumatic event in the life of a people is when you are denied the language that you are most comfortable with to express yourself. So, this was the first trauma that was inflicted on the tribals through what we know of as modern education and modern development.

For many years this continued until PESA came in 1996 when they were given a constitutional power to govern themselves – until then they had no constitutional power – which meant that the *gram sabha* became very important. *Gram sabha* was constitutionally empowered in order that tribals could access their own traditions that they may develop. 1996, 1947 and 1935, over these many years, the tribals have been systematically deprived of their own language. Now that does not mean that they cannot speak the language. All that it means is that culture is now divided into two parts. Culture is now that part of their life which is in their domestic domain and it has nothing to do with what they do in the public domain, which is to say, if I am speaking a language at home, it is of no value to me when I go to do a job, when I go to do a market transaction. It is completely irrelevant for me in the livelihood that I do. This is the first important dualism that is promoted by the agencies.

Coupled with that is an entire campaign to say that their modes of livelihood are absolutely destructive of the forest. This shifting cultivation was defined as a destructive practice of the forest and the logic by which shifting cultivation was defined as destructive was a very very economic, political logic and had nothing to do with the study of the system. The logic was that the carrying capacity of shifting cultivation reduces as the land available for shifting cultivation reduces. But nobody answers the question how did the land for shifting cultivation get reduced. It was reduced because the Forest Department started to encroach on the land and, therefore, the time cycle required for fallow land was reduced and, therefore, shifting cultivation became an unviable proposition. Now, this is the other sub-text to it. So, first is you deny them the language, then you

deny them the mode of livelihood. Then you say you forget the language, you forget your mode of livelihood, you learn what we are telling you, which is, you learn a language which you cannot express yourself in, you become part of the job market and you become now part of the modern citizen. So, what is the logic? You have to forego who you are and become someone else that you are not, in order to become part of modernity. So, this is the aggression, this is the pre-history of the making of the Red Corridor.

Now, what happens after this? You are exposed to an outside world, of which you know nothing. Lot of *Adiwasis* became tribal people, they got jobs, they made better living for life, they have started industries, they became shopkeepers, they got blue-collar jobs. All these people went up and actually they had no way to remember because their language was not related to their livelihood and the forest, which was very important part of the language, had been taken away because shifting cultivation was declared an unhealthy practice. So, you lose the raw material which makes your language rich. So, what is left of *Adiwasi* culture? Dance, music, clothes and festivals. And this is what is left of *Adiwasi* culture.

PROF. ANAND KUMAR: Can you come again on those five things?

PROF. SAVYASAACHI: Dance, clothes, music and festivals.

PROF. ANAND KUMAR: And food also?

PROF. SAVYASAACHI: And a little bit of food. Because that food you cannot get because you are not in the forest any more, so, you have to make do with whatever is available in the market. Now, this culture has nothing to do with the language that they speak. The language and this culture is actually deeply embedded in the way they understand the forest. So, you take the forest away, you have a very very ceremonial idea of a culture in the way you want to do things.

Now comes this whole idea of using tribal traditions to empower them by the Forest Rights Act, 2006. My curiosity is, what has remained of these traditions, what has become of these traditions because of more than 100 years of

aggression and violence and the aggression and violence I will enumerate: No language available to them, the forest has been taken away from them and they are supposed to have a tradition left from this onslaught which will then be incorporated in Forest Act, 2006. So, my worry is that yes, tribal traditions are very important but what is it that is left of these traditions that the FRA, 2006 will actually be learned. You study the FRA, 2006 very carefully and you find that FRA, 2006 does not recognize a very important component of that tradition, which is, the respect for fallow land. I think everybody understands what is fallow land. Fallow land is, after cultivating one crop, when you leave the land to recuperate. When Mother Earth is regenerating and regaining its fertility, you don't do anything there until the recuperation is done to move on and on and on. Now, these fallow lands are to the tune of two generations. I cultivated a plot, say, in 2000. It will be cultivated again in 2016 because it takes so much of time for the land to regenerate, and in the meanwhile, I will move from one plot to the other, until I come back to this plot. Now, 16 years is not recognised by the 2006 legislation. It puts a ceiling of a particular year – I do not remember the year.

AN HON. PARTICIPANT: 2005.

PROF. SAVYASAACHI: 2005. The Act is passed in 2006 and the ceiling is on 2005, only one year. What does it mean? It means that you are forcing them again, wherever there is an association in the forest, to cut out that association and become settled cultivators in the forest. So, this legislation is actually a ploy to take forward the agenda of Green Revolution. And what is the agenda of Green Revolution? It is to destroy fallow periods in agriculture absolutely. What does it mean? It means that you will take harvest back to back. There is no way in which land is given time to recuperate. So, what happens is, the fertility of the land decreases every time you go to it. It is like saying, if I am making you exercise 20 hours a day and giving you only one hour of rest, then what will happen to you? You will be sapped of your energy. You will have no time to rest. Any living organism needs time to rest in order that it may become healthy again to go back

to work. So, what happens? 2005 is designed in such a way that cultivation patterns become in the model of Green Revolution. Green Revolution does not only mean fertilizers, Green Revolution means that you do not allow fallow land at all. Green Revolution's great achievement was that it destroyed and annihilated fallow periods in agriculture once and for all. 2006 FRA is doing that exactly. In that one year, from where you will start to document what part of the tradition are you going to access, what part of the tradition is getting left, what part of the traditions are you incorporating in the act of giving them traditional rights over land? That is the first assault. The second assault is, in three generations' time you have prepared the ground for migration outside the tribal areas. When land is going to be divided among siblings, what is going to be left of land for every member of the family? Some will get it, some will have to go out. So, this is a plan for migration and shifting the entire population of the countryside into the cities. My concern, therefore, is that what is left of this tradition, we want to know, that is being given so much of importance in the FRA, 2006? This is a brief sketch of the Red Corridor.

My last point - and I think there are many more things to say which I will discuss as and when the questions come - is that the Red Corridor is also created because of a stalemate between two sets of people who cannot find a way to dialogue. And I think it is important to understand what are the conditions because of which the dialogue is not taking place? Both the parties are of the view that they know better than the tribals what is good for them. The fight is not for listening to what the tribals say, the fight is about whose agenda is better than the other's, and both of them say that my agenda is better than yours. This is a big big issue because what they are missing out is that there is a possibility of a third agenda. No dialogue is possible between two people. We want a third party for any dialogue to be healthy. For a good dialogue we need a minimal of three participants. I will give you a small story and with this, I will end my presentation. I think everybody knows Abujhmad. Abujhmad is that area where there is a civil

war between the Maoists and the State. You know what Abujhmad actually is? It is Shringar Bhum. The people living in Abujhmad call themselves as Koitors and they describe this land as Shringar Bhum, not Abujhmad. And why it is Shringar Bhum is because every little corner has a story, every little stone has a story, and it is Shringar Bhum which is the land of Talurmuttee. Talurmuttee is the Mother Earth and the entire population does not own the land. The entire population are the custodians of the land on behalf of Talurmuttee. Their job is to protect the land, to ensure that fallow periods happen because that is what Talurmuttee represents. Talurmuttee represents a very important principle of labour, which is what *Adiwasis* live by, which is to say, that which is not the product of your labour, does not belong to you. The reverse side is, the entire realm of nature is not a product of human labour. So, they will not touch the entire nature. The entire landscape is not a product of human labour at all. On that understanding, they are only the custodians. But if they labour something which is a product like this, then it belongs to you. If you go to an *Adiwasi* area, especially if you go to Shringar Bhum, you may leave a diamond glittering in the middle of a road, you go there after six years, nobody would have picked it up. This was the tradition. And this honesty comes not from being innocent and not knowing what diamond is, this honesty comes from recognition of only one principle, which is that it is not a product of my labour, so, I will not touch it. Now, in this Red Corridor business, I do not see what is the obligation for people who subscribe to Shringar Bhum to be on the side of either of the parties. Today, they are compelled. If they are not with the police, then they have to be with the Maoists., and if they are not with the Maoists, they have to be with the police because if they belong to neither, they will be mauled and beaten to death. You have to take a position. But this is not right. There is a third position and the third position is the position of Shringar Bhum. I think Shringar Bhum has enough potential and it can teach many things to us. One thing that they teach us, in brief I will tell you the principle. Total memory is madness. If you remember everything in life, you cannot live. If you

forget everything in life, you cannot live. The problematic of the civilization is what is worthy of remembering and what is worthy of forgetting? This is how the Koitor lives his life and this is a principle that they have learnt by living in the forest. This is very important for us in this society because our history does not want us to forget. The entire discipline of history is geared towards remembering everything that has happened in the past. History does not tell us certain things that are to be forgotten. The entire business of heritage is to not forget. We suffer because we do not have the skill to let go of certain things. I do not mean let go in a mystical religious sense, there are certain issues in society that have to be kept aside if you want to have a sane good society in which what is good for the collective is also good for the individual and what is good for the individual is also good for the collective. Our social dispensation today is such that what is good for the individual is bound to be bad for the collective and what is good for the collective is bound to be bad for the individual. This is the social dispensation that we want to live in and this is not good. There is much to learn from *Adiwasis*, specially Shringar Bhum that I know of, and I think if we do similar research with other *Adiwasis*, I think there is much that the civilization has to learn from them and, therefore, we must create space for the third possibility that why do you have to follow either of the two lines of interest. Thank you very much.

PROF. ANAND KUMAR: Thank you Prof. Savyasaachi for such a comprehensive and, at the same time, provoking input for the group to discuss with you further. He gives us a chronological view and he makes us look at the roots of the concept of Red Corridor going to 1930s, which is a culmination of continuity of resistance, rebellion and protest against colonization, and then he brings us to Constituent Assembly which was supposed to open a new chapter in our civilisational journey. But then he underlines that unfortunately the Constituent Assembly had little contribution for making a new paradigm. There were people like Jaipal Singh of Jharkhand fame. He was also one of the most educated Members of the Constituent Assembly but he became one of the

marginal voices and so, there was a continuity of colonial pattern to exclusion and semi-developmental engagement in the form of reservation of seats and reservation in education and jobs for recruitment of elite, and finally he makes us a little disappointed about this forest. PESA he is happy with but he is very unhappy with Forest Rights Act of 2006. So, these are four dates for all of us to engage for further research – 1930s, 1946-49 Constituent Assembly, 1996 PESA and 2005-06 Forest Rights Act. But he is not ending with a disappointing kind of conclusion that nothing can be done. There is no-win situation because he is talking about the space available for a third approach or a third party engagement which is the primary condition for any meaningful dialogue, and as you may see in this book of extracts, there are a number of Papers by some of you who have critiqued the Government policy or the Naxal approach to solve the issues which are on the table.

Now, I will be very happy with some of your questions for Prof. Savyasaachi. So, manage the time because it is already 3 o'clock and we close by 3.30. So, we can safely allot ten minutes for questions-answers.

QUESTION BY MR. CHANNA NARESH (**PL. CHECK THE NAME**): Thank you, Savyasaachi Sir, for your informative lecture. I am a PhD student from Indian Agriculture Research Institute, Pusa. I would like to know if schools would take away their languages and if forest development would take away their mode of livelihood, where else the Government would invest the money that it gets in Tribal Sub-plan?

QUESTION BY MS. BINITA: Sir, I am a research scholar and doing PhD from Magadh University, Bihar. My question is that who are we to decide that they should preserve their culture and tradition? Is it because we enjoy seeing them, because it is a source of entertainment for us? So, we should leave it to them and we should just give them the opportunities and open the doors so that they can come out from the confined areas they are living in, and see what is the world around them, and they should decide that in the name of culture and tradition,

what they should preserve and what new things they can add to their existing or practicing tradition and culture.

QUESTION BY MS.MEENAKSHI: Sir, I am Asstt. Professor. My question is, is there any positive impact of violence in Red Corridor on tribal development? Everybody talks about negative development.

QUESTION BY MR. NISHANT GOKHALE: Sir, I am associated with the Bhasha Research and Publication Centre, Baroda. My question is, Prof. Savyasaachi used the term 'the depth of time'. I am wondering if there is any special meaning or emphasis to that.

PROF. SAVYASAACHI: Let me answer the first question. I was in the North-East and I was engaging with *Khasi* people there. The issue was that the Government wanted to take away land to set up an atomic energy plant and there was a big debate among the *Khasis* whether or not to let the plant be set up. They asked me. What do you think I should have said? They wanted to set up the plant, should I have let them go to set up the nuclear power plant? No. So, somewhere you have to take a decision when other people do not understand the full implications of what they do. The question is, who am I to decide? I do not mean me, I mean anybody else. Who are we to decide on somebody else's behalf on what is good or what is bad for them? Nobody has a right to do that in any case. But for people who know better, it is their moral responsibility to tell them what they are in for and not pretend that they do not know what is happening in the world. So, if I am sitting on the roadside and *Adiwasis* are wanting to join the mainstream and they come and ask me whether they should go there or not, what do you think I should say? Should I not say, 'If you go there, you will not get water to drink'? Should I not tell them that? Or should I not tell them that there is pollution in that land? I will tell them that. Then I will say, 'If you want to go, you go'. Now, I want to also draw your attention to one fact that the knowledge of *Adiwasi* about medicinal plants is amazing. We do not recognize the fact that they have done this without physics, chemistry, biology and mathematics. So, if I want

to go and become an apprentice to a **Shaman** (PL. CHECK THIS WORD), should I be allowed to do it or not? I should be allowed to do it. But I am not allowed to do it. Then people will say, ‘You are wanting them to live in isolation by wanting them to become a disciple of the Shaman, and I want to refute that argument by saying that isolation is from a particular standpoint. The Red Corridor has isolated them also. They were not isolated before this. Before PESA came into existence, the relationship between the *Adiwasis* and non-*Adiwasis* was very good. I am witness to it. The moment PESA came in, this relationship was destroyed once and for all.

MS. BINITA: Sir, Hansda Sowvendra is a writer from Jharkhand and he has written short stories *Adiwasi will not Dance*. He is talking about a particular group over there that their dance and drum beating is very popular and whenever there is a government function or event, they are called upon to perform on behalf of *Adiwasi* tradition and culture to show off them and one of the performers in the story claims that we are often called and remembered during these events, otherwise we are left over with our so-called tradition and culture and this is not giving us the basic needs that we need, and the Government is not looking after us after the event is over. Even in one of the events in Jharkhand – I do not remember the event – the President was also present.

PROF. SAVYASAACHI: Do you agree with that? I want to ask you. Are you in agreement with what the author is saying? What is your opinion on the matter?

MS. BINITA: Yes, Sir, I agree.

PROF. SAVYASAACHI: So, that is the answer to your question also. Therefore, you have answered your own question. I do not have to answer your question.

MS. BINITA: That tradition and culture is not supporting them anymore because it also depends on the history and what are the conditions and situations during which that tradition or culture came into practice.

PROF. SAVYASAACHI: True. I want to add a little more depth to that by saying that this tradition and culture is meaningful in the forest because this

tradition and culture is actually the way of reading the forest. Just as we are reading books, they are reading the jungle in the form of dance and music. Here there is nothing like that. Neither they read us nor we read them. When they go to dance, what is everybody understanding from this dance? Nothing, except for some nice music, some swing. Nothing more. Nobody is taking anything home. But when you listen to Kishore Kumar, you are taking the song home. You are murmuring it all the time. What are you taking from them? Nothing. So, this is what I mean. This is what is left of culture - dance, music, songs and clothes. That is all that is left of culture. Nothing more than that. Okay, more later on.

Then, there was a question, is there any positive impact of violence? If you understand violence only in one way, I do not think there can be any positive impact of violence. But *Adiwasis* have a very fine understanding of these things also. For example, they think pain. If inflicting pain is an example of violence, they will say there are certain kinds of pains that are good pains, not every pain is bad. In our medical system, every pain is bad. The moment you have a pain, you take a pill and that is the end of it. Certain pains are very good for your mind, for your body and spirit. So, you should be able to differentiate between pain that is good for the mind, body and spirit, and pains that are bad for the mind, body and spirit. That which is good for the mind, body and spirit, you should nurture. You should not get rid of it because it is important for your own constitution. This is an understanding that we do not have at all. For us, any pain is bad, for them, no, there are different kinds of pains. I hope that answers your question.

Then, what should you invest in? What I am going to tell you is not possible but what you should invest in is to keep the contractors away from the *Adiwasis*. What you should invest in is to say, if I want to get a scholarship to go and be an apprentice to a Shaman, you should give me the scholarship to go and do that. This will be the true respect to an *Adiwasi*. I want to learn from a Shaman about medicinal plants. I want to know how he identifies these plant, I want to know how did they find out that certain plants have medicinal properties. Modern

science cannot do it. Modern science needs a huge laboratory to do this research. *Adiwasis* do it very well. I want apprenticeship to a particular Shaman in Shringar Bhum. Will the Sub-plan give me that scholarship to go and stay there for five years? This is *Adiwasi* development. How so? I am begging the knowledge mainstream. Do you know, 19 out of 20 plants are not known to modern botany? Modern botany is so bankrupt in its knowledge that it does not know at least 98 per cent of the forest universe and those who have the capacity to know it, you have pushed them out. *Adiwasi* knows it because he is walking in the jungle everyday. You say that he is walking in search of cultivation. No. He is actually experimenting and studying the plants. Every *Adiwasi* is walking in the forest at least for ten hours a day and when he comes back home, he is telling the entire group of people around the fire the stories of what he has heard. This is generation of knowledge. This collective enterprise of generating knowledge is what generates the medicinal knowledge of a plant. Do you know that *Adiwasis* can talk to plants? Plants tell them which part of them they should take and at what point of time in order to get the medicine. I want to know how they do it. In Europe, people are now following this method to make plants grow better. They play good music to the plants so that they grow better. You should read this book called *The Secret Life of Plants*. This is a whole book which is beginning from the experiments of Jagdish Chandra Bose, an Indian scientist who actually recorded that plants can cry. This is called plant intelligence. There is a huge amount of research going on, on plant intelligence where they want to know how plants respond to human beings. And one important research is that they brought two different human beings into the room with a plant and they put an encephalograph to document the response of the plant. One human being was absolutely annoyed, angry and the graph was very very sharp, another human being was very calm and the graph was very soft. And this memory the plant retained even after six months. Now, this is very important for us to survive because your food industry and your pharmaceutical industry and your seed industry is dependent on understanding of

bio principles. Otherwise we will not get so many varieties of seeds that we get. Our seeds do not reproduce the second time.

Your question about depth of time. Imagine your unit of time was 24 months and not 12 months, what would that do to your understanding of the world? Imagine you had to finish a task in 24 years, not in two years. You will have that much of depth in your thought because your depth of time would mean that you are able to see many more things the time has to unfold and show to you. So, in *Adiwasi* life, this is a very important learning for me. Ideas grow at the rate at which plants grow. You cannot make ideas work at the rate at which computers work. Some ideas are biennial, some ideas are annual, some ideas are six-monthly, some ideas are six-yearly, some ideas are generational, like plants. Ideas also mature at the rate of plants. This is what *Adiwasis* believe. That is the depth of plants. If you are not able to differentiate between ideas that grow in one generation and ideas that grow in two months, you will never be able to do your thesis. If you have taken an idea that will mature in ten years and you want to finish it in five years, you will never do it. So, ideas have a life of their own. This is another learning from *Adiwasis*. This is the depth of time.

I think I have answered all the four questions.

PROF. ANAND KUMAR: Yes. Maybe, you can take some more questions, two or three.

QUESTION BY MR. RACHIT: My question is, you mentioned that the *Adiwasis* were denied livelihood and then they had to forego who they were and became part of modernity. It is obvious that when they become competitive in job market, they may not like to go back to the same dance, the same clothes and the same food that they eat. So, what is more important? Preserving their traditions and culture is more important or bringing them towards development is more important? If preserving their culture is more important, even then it should not be imposed on them but it should be left to them whether they select it or not.

PROF. SAVYASAACHI: Can I change your question a bit?

MR. RACHIT: Yes.

PROF, SAVYASAACHI: I do not buy this terminology of preserving cultures. It is a terminology that has come because economic development is unmindfully destroying everything. So, it is some way to tell us that look, certain things we need to preserve because we cannot stop economic development from going at the speed that it does. But look at it differently. Why should there be a choice between doing a ten-to-five job and doing agriculture? I can do both. Now, this choice is not available. The manner in which capitalist systems work, this choice is not available to you and the reason is very simple that the timescale at which agriculture works and the time scale at which capital works are not the same. Therefore, what does capital do? It changes agriculture to its time scale. How does it do that? By hybridizing seeds so that they can grow faster and faster and faster and faster. It is not as if you continue to do shifting cultivation, you will not be able to feed millions of people; you will still be able to feed them. Shifting cultivation produces enough of millet to be sold and circulated and eaten. But the politics is, you have to substitute rice with millet because you think rice is superior food and millet is not. Today, this millet revolution is happening across the world. People are advocating the use of millet if you want good carbohydrates. Millet is complex carbohydrates. It is a better source of energy. It does not take you to diabetes. Now, what is it that gives this cultural privilege to rice over millet? It is association with the people. If the Queen of England was to have millets, millets would be the most privileged food you will ever have. Unfortunately, it is the *Adiwasi*. What is so difficult about *Adiwasi* for you to understand is because they are bare-bodied and our culture thinks of a bare body to be very dirty. Our whole understanding of body is that it is a dirty thing, it is not a good thing to have a bare body. We do not respect our bodies. Therefore, anybody who is nude, anybody who is bare-bodied, is an abhorrent sight. Well, they have a lot of respect for their body. They are very handsome people. They are very beautiful people. See, it is a cultural question. Do we have understanding of a body other than the

physiology of it? No, we do not have any understanding of a bare body. These values interfere in the way you will give the option that livelihood in the forest is as good as livelihood in the cities. But this capital will not allow, and we know this very clearly. They will give all kinds of explanations. One is population growth. What is population growth? I will tell you what population growth is. We are very nice. There are about 50 people here. They are very sparsely distributed. You reduce the size of the room to half. Population has grown, whereas not a single person has been added to the group. So, populations grow because we squeeze the size of the space. There is so much of congestion in Delhi because people live in one room with ten people. I hope that sufficiently answers your question.

PROF. ANAND KUMAR: I am so happy that Prof. Savyasaachi has created more hunger for ideas, more thirst for knowledge and more confusion in your mind. Some people were clear enough to ask questions and others got so confused that they had their pen and pencil ready but they did not know how to articulate and whether it will look intelligent enough for the group. But I thank Prof. Savyasaachi that he has opened our minds to receive more information. He made a historical frame, first of all, and then he created a cultural critique and then he ended with alternative analysis or alternative meaning of the dominant views. My job becomes easier and I have to tell you a few things about the questions as student of political sociology and culture, about a situation which is in form primarily by violence in the context of tradition and culture. First, we look at culture. Culture, whether culture of a city, culture of a village, culture of forest-based communities, has two qualities. It has territoriality like a tree. Culture is like a tree. It has roots, it has the flavour of the soil, taste of the soil upon which the tree is growing, and culture is also like a river. It has a flow and with the flow, it creates tributaries and it receives water from them and it also has distributaries. So, it goes beyond the main course of the river to many many directions. Look at the journey of any river. And when you look at culture as tree, like a tree, it grows,

it has flowers, it has fragrance, it has fruits, it crease new seeds and then there is multiplier effect of that particular tree. But like a tree, it may decay, it may die. So, there is nothing perennial if you look at culture as a tree. At the same time, when you look at culture as a river, then there is a flow of time and space. Like a river, you cannot take a bath in river twice because that river where you took the bath has gone to Gangasagar. Yesterday it was at Rishikesh, today at Kashi and tomorrow at Gangasagar. So, there is a role of memory there. There is a context for understanding cultures. And I am very happy to be moving at this point because there is a historical dimension to the question of understanding, exploring the tribal culture, there is a territorial dimension to it. We have an envelope-like category or a hold-on-like category called 'tribal'. But there is great difference between the so-called tribals of North-East, Central India, North-West, Southern India and Eastern India. So, we have to have patience to have grip over the diversity contained in the idea called tribes or tribals. Similarly, the Naxal question or the violence question, Red Corridor, it starts from Tirupatinath, Andhra, and goes up to Pashupatinath. Red Corridor is not a straight corridor, it is quite a zigzag and it goes through several States of India, starting from Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, touches Uttar Pradesh and enters Nepal. It is also suggested that Red Corridor is dominated and created by Maoists. It is a Chinese virus or Chinese implant or Chinese contribution, depending upon your perspective. You may call it a disease and you may call it a revolutionary turn of most marginalized people. But, in any case, there is need to have a temporal understanding of regional politics, regional economy, ranging from *tendu patta* to mines and minerals. I suggest that this question has to be approached with both, overall a macro view but also a case study approach, to capture the specificities, and I bring you three stories before I conclude my presentation. One is coming from southern U.P. – Mirzapur, Sonbhadra, Robertsganj, a place of perennial problems and a place which was one of the top in the first twenty years of post-colonial nation building in terms of

power generation, cement and aluminium factories. You name it and they were all there. But it created not a sense of development but a sense of deprivation with three Ds among the tribals who were the original people who were displaced to create dams for water reservoirs, for hydroelectric plants, who were displaced to create factories of aluminium and cement and gradually, first they were considered to be protest people, not following the hegemonic appeal of Indian National Congress because they were voting communists and socialists, and after 1967-68, they were declared Naxals. The whole area, the three districts, Chandauli, Robertsganj and Sonbhadra are supposed to be the Naxal pocket of Uttar Pradesh, bordering Madhya Pradesh on the one side and Bihar on the other side. So, from Bhojpur to Jabalpur, there was a triangle, but the story was very pathetic. In our resources - in the definition of us, they are also included as citizens of India - there was a combination of 3 Ds – deprivation, destitution and destruction. The whole ecological system, their water bodies, their forests were nearly decimated and it was not the Naxal period, it was not non-Congress period, and it became the hotbed of insurgency. First they were into petty crimes and then they became a little more organized because they got some political volunteers working there and it is a very interesting case. One of my students did a PhD on how very passive people became politically involved. They were not involved in national movement because they were in the shadow of places like Banaras and Allahabad and Rewa. Then they became engaged in small peasant organizations, and when they became militants, because there was protest in which a few policemen were involved and a few were killed also and they killed the local people. Later on the same community becomes available for Bahujan Samaj Party and Samajwadi Party as solid vote bank and they enter into democratic process. So, there were channels beyond Congress and they were involved and absorbed by Samajwadi Party and Bahujan Samaj Party. In between they had a transitional phase with CPI(ML) Liberation Group and till today, it is shown as part of the Red Corridor. But there have been many ups and downs from marginality to mainstreaming.

A second case comes from Niyamgiri. Some of you are from Odisha. Is there anyone from Odisha present here? Where have they all gone? They will have to be called next time.

DR. NUPUR TIWARY: They were there in the morning.

PROF. ANAND KUMAR: They were there in the morning. Niyamgiri is a mountain which is inhabited by a tribe called Kondh tribe. They are of two types. Those who are closer to water resources are called Jharnias and the others who are a little above are Dongrias. One of the top companies of an NRI, Vedanta company of Anil Agarwal, based in London comes with a proposal of a multinational engagement to dig out bauxite and other precious minerals from the belly of this mountain, Niyamgiri, and the Government of Odisha is happy because billions of rupees are going to flow in, and the Government of India is happier because it is going to create a flagship project in Odisha, of liberalisation, privatization and globalization. But the tribes are not happy and they start resistance movement. Backward tribes! Foolish people! They do not understand the power of modernity. It goes on and on and on, till the PESA provisions are used by the social activists there and they come up to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court listens to their plea. They say, this is our father; this mountain is not a mountain, it is not a repository of minerals. How can we allow our father to be killed before we are killed? And the Supreme court is quite baffled. Of course, the Government of India bureaucrats, Planning Commission people, we, the development experts, are all very unhappy with this backward understanding. But law is law and the Supreme Court tells them and Vedanta both to go for respecting the PESA provisions and there is referendum. There are 12 village panchayats in the whole mountain area. Each one of them had to hold a public hearing and then a referendum. They were not to be attended by media or NGOs or political parties. And you can imagine what was the result of the referendum! Twelve village *panchayat* hearings and 12 votings, and all 12 votings were clear 'no' and Supreme Court asked Vedanta to go away. The Odisha Government could not do

much and the Central Government failed to convince the local people. Niyamgiri movement had attracted global attention. Felix Padel, grandson of Charles Darwin has written a book about the global aluminium cartel. This is not only Indian developmental model but the global cartel is pitted against tribals of India in search of these reserved places of gold and diamond in a way because these minerals are so valuable. They are only eight per cent of the population of our country - 7-1/2 per cent to 8 per cent – but they are living in 25 per cent of the territorial India and they are facing a number of challenges. There is another book written by a friend of my friend Savyasaachi, Aseem Shrivastava *Churning the Earth*. I want you to read this book, buy this book and if you do not have money, steal it from somewhere. It is so important to make sense of radicalization of simple, innocent, illiterate, ill-informed tribals because it is trial by fire. You know physics of heat and energy and you will tell about the heat. That is one way of learning about heat. The other is, you are thrown into boiling water and then you jump out of it and you say, my God, it is really horrible! So, tribal India is learning about the pathology of progress by fire. This book of Aseem Shrivastava is called *Churning the Earth: Making India Global*. It is 2003 book; it is not a very recent book. So, you can assume that things are change after that but things are changed for the worse, not for the better because now biodiversity and cultural diversity, which are inter-dependent, both are under attack because of this corporatisation of the global system.

We have three patterns in analyzing cultural change and I suggest that you try to look at these three lenses in your own particular research programme. I am very happy that Nupur Ji has gathered the future experts of our society. Most of you are engaged as research scholars or as faculty embers. You have 20 to 40 years to go. One is, in any culture, there is a situation of crisis and there is capacity of resilience. All cultures do not have uniform resilience capacity. Similarly, in tribal India, different tribes have different kinds of crises and different kinds of resilience. If you go to North-East, for example, their political

resilience was more significant than their linguistic resilience. Much of Nagaland is now English speaking whereas there were 28 – Mr. Gokhale will tell you – known Naga languages because there are 28 tribes. But all of them have now become homogenised through this invasive impact of English language. They are all most educated among the tribes and that is why they qualify most for the reserved positions in civil services etc. But their internal resilience on linguistic front is not very satisfactory. But their linguistic homogenization created a larger category called Nagas and the demand for Nagaland. So, you have challenge and response as the second lens that there is challenge before a community and there may be many responses. As Prof. Savyasaachi told us, there were 119 rebellions led by people of the kind of Birsa Munda. So, that was the militant response. But there are other responses also. All challenges do not create resistance. Sometimes there is subordination. You have compromise, you have co-option, so you have to look at that.

The third point is challenge and opportunity, which relates to questions raised in the session in response to Prof. Savyasaachi's presentation. Every challenge is an opportunity. When I was in school and now when you have been out of your exam period recently, if you failed, then there were two kinds of responses. Some people said, 'Oh, you are not fit for doing this. Forget about mathematics. Go and learn sociology like Anand Kumar'. and the other response will be, 'Oh, this is your chance to do it better next time'. So, a failure is the stepping stone for success. A challenge is taken as an opportunity for revisiting your own roots, your own cultural capital. We argue in sociology and anthropology about cultural studies. There is continuity and change. There is hardly any culture in the world worth the name which does not have a history of continuity, but also there is hardly any culture in the world which has not changed over a period of time. So, in studying the cultural question in response to the politics of governance in the realm of Red Corridor - and I am happy that you have confined it to Red Corridor, otherwise it will become too big a canvas to colour it

properly - Red Corridor is a zone of protest, waking up, and it has been brutalized. Today, culturally speaking, there are three possibilities for people in the Red Corridor. One is migration - why to get caught in this crossfire - and migration in many ways, for many reasons. The other is, becoming part of one of the two options or choices, Salwa Judum or a variety of formations with *Lal Jhanda* (red flag). The third option is to give up and leave it to *Mahakal* (the dynamics of time), 'what can I do', 'I cannot make a difference', 'I hunt with the hounds and run with the hare' – opportunism. But this all together creates a situation of decay, not a situation of evolution. It looks that the cultural meaning of the role of State in the Red Corridor is more and more demonizing, mutilating. There are Papers in this book of abstracts about resettlement policy, there are studies here in this book of abstracts about gender question, and of course, there are other studies which others have done about the problems of poor and resourceless in this whole large part of India. Around 140 districts are supposed to be there in this Red Corridor. So, if your country has around 670 or so districts – I am not very sure because when a new government comes, if they cannot do much, then they create a new district out of an old district; so, it is very difficult to catch up or keep up with the exact number – or assuming that on the outer side there are 700 districts, then out of the 700, what is the ratio if there are 140 districts declared officially as the districts affected by Left Wing extremism? One-sixth! And if it is a part of a great continuum which involves a variety of States, ranging from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh to Jharkhand and Bihar, then there are different implications for political economy. Politically speaking, the cultural question is now reflection of failed democracy. We talk about Pakistan as a failed State but in our case, use of arms and weapons to deal with your own citizens and civilians is an internal failure and we have to catch up with it. As Prof. Savyasaachi has told you, these constitutional exercises from PESA to FRA are efforts to create new solutions of an old problem.

Let me conclude by suggesting that there are four questions for studying the implications of Left Wing extremism as well as State violence in the context of culture and tradition. The first question is a popular question for any research: What is it? What are you looking at? Is it a snake or a rope? Is there any issue or you are doing research just for the sake of doing research? What is the question, continuity and change or crisis and collapse, alienation or integration? Second is, why it is happening? Is it a discourse or is it a narrative coming from the top? Next time when Savyasaachi Ji comes, he may tell you that it did not begin with Mao Tse Tung's Naxalbari impact. Pravir Bhanj Deo, a very popular leader of the Bastar area was killed in his own palace along with a few thousand – number is still now known – and the story remains very confusing and demoralizing. It happened during democratic days; it was not happening in emergency time. People of Jharkhand felt betrayed again and again by the elite in Bihar and, of course, Uttarakhand people by elite in Lucknow. So, why, and 'why' has many dimensions. It is not a simple national, anti-national, Naxal, anti-Naxal story? And third, what has been the architecture of this whole process, What were the turning points, right and wrong? Then, the final question which will make your study relevant is the emerging trajectories. What are the possibilities? Do we need more arms and weapons so that they clear the situation, like more antibiotics to kill the virus infection, an internal surgical operation or a democratic solution, and if democratic solution, decentralization or centralization, co-option of the elite or proliferation of the elite formation process.? I am very happy with some of the Papers that you also have a lens called gender lens. This gender dimension is mostly missing in much of the discourse of media and policy makers.

So, to sum up, I will suggest that when you look at the cultural aspect of Left Wing extremist activities-affected areas or the Red Corridor, try to look at the metaphor of culture in terms of both river and tree, territoriality and flow, tributaries and distributaries because it is not like a binary, it was studied by people like N.K. Bose when they talked about Hinduisation of tribes of Odisha,

Nirmal Kumar Bose, and it is also studied by a few people in North-East with reference to Christianisation. So, it is not that it is only single window system, there are many windows and many doors to understand the tribal question and its cultural and traditional dynamics. Thank you.

I hand over to Nupur Ji. We overshot by twenty minutes, I am sorry. But I think Savyasaachi Ji needed a little more time because of the depth of his knowledge and expertise.

DR. NUPUR TIWARY: Thank you Chair, Prof. Anand Kumar, and thank you Prof. Savyasaachi Ji. After such an enlightening lecture and so many inside and deep roots of the issue that we are here to discuss, there is very little for me to say except that the doors which were talked about, I am sure, this Centre for Tribal Research and Exploration will be taking up in depth under their guidance and there are others also who are taking deep interest in these areas, and many areas which are still unexplored, which are still a big question, will be taken care of. So, I thank both of you and also the participants who were very interactive, I would say, to some extent, and also having all the patience since morning. Some of them I think have really gone. I have to find out who have gone because you have to take your certificates from us; you cannot go like this.

So, I thank all of you. Tea is waiting for you. After that you join us back for taking the certificates.

PROF. ANAND KUMAR: Sorry, I had said that I will tell you three stories. One I told you about Sonbhadra-Robertsganj, one I told you about Niyamgiri, and third is about Kashipur. Kashipur is another piece of very interesting story in Odisha where they said with folded hands that “Even after sixty years of independence, there is neither a post office nor a hospital nor a school. The sand which is there in our area is very rich and perhaps you want to make uranium or thorium out of it and you want to displace 30,000 of us. We catch fish from the sea, pluck coconuts from the trees, we remain with our bodies half covered, half-naked, for God’s sake, leave us as we are.” But they did not leave them because Kashipur had very

rich deposits in its sand. So, how and where does the demon of development reach and how people resist that, for that, a very interesting catalogue can be prepared. I suggest you to go for deep case studies, as much as possible. Then you will see the diversity as well as uniqueness of the situation.

Thank you let us go for a cup of tea.

DR. NUPUR TIWARY: We have some mementos also for the respected dignitaries on the dais.

**(MEMENTOS WERE PRESENTED TO PROF. ANAND  
KUMAR AND PROF. SAVYASAACHI)**

**(END OF THE PANEL DISCUSSIONS)**