

Tribal Youth Issues,

Edited by

Tribal Youth Issues Challenges and Perspective

Edited by
Remruatpuii Tochwawng



Tribal Research and Cultural Institute,
Govt. of Tripura, Agartala

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Tribal Research and Cultural Institute
Government of Tripura
Agartala

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Foreword

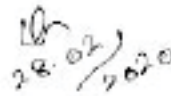
Engaging in the deliberations of the development of the tribal people by looking at what challenges and opportunities their youth are facing is a very pragmatic way of dealing with the subject. This is exactly the way we should deal with the issues revolving around tribal population in Tripura. Instead of beating about the bush and trying to solve the “disease” by treating the “symptoms”, we need to search for the cure and face the ground realities.

A step towards this goal has been taken when the Department of Sociology, Women’s College, Agartala, Tripura, organized a National Seminar on “Tribal Youth in Tripura: Issues, Challenges and Perspectives” on the 7th and 8th April, 2018 in collaboration with Tribal Research and Cultural Institute (TR & CI), Government of Tripura, Agartala and which was funded by Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India. A number of scholars and academicians, expert in their own fields came together, presented and discussed papers on issues relating to the problems and challenges of tribal youth in Tripura.

This volume is a collection of the papers presented at the National Seminar. I sincerely believe that the papers published in this volume will enlighten us and help us to better and more systematically deal with the issues surrounding tribal problems in general and Tripura tribal youth in particular.

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I congratulate the editor for bringing out this book and thank her for her efforts and dedications towards making this project a success. I have no doubt that this book would be a valuable contribution in the field of tribal studies.



(D. Debbarma)

Director,

Dated, Agartala
28th February, 2020

Tribal Research & Cultural Institute,
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Message

It is a matter of enormous contentment for me to learn that Tribal Research and Cultural Institute (TR & CI), Govt. of Tripura is bringing out the the Proceedings of the National Seminar entitled "Tribal Youth in Tripura : Issues, Challenges and Perspectives", jointly organized by the Department of Sociology, Women's College and TR & CI, Govt. of Tripura on 7-8th April, 2018 and funded by Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India.

I am confident that the articles selected for publication in this volume will enrich all the readers. This seminar proceeding would certainly help everyone to have the latest updates to have a better understanding to contribute more for the betterment of the society. My heartiest compliment goes to Smt. Remruatpuii Tochwang, Organizing Secretary of the Seminar and the Editor for her enthusiastic and hard work. My sincere thanks also goes to all the scholars and contributors for their hard work and effort they imparted to achieve this. The intent of this proceedings is to disseminate information about the various issues and challenges of the tribal youths in Tripura. The publication of the seminar proceeding will definitely bring opportunities among the academicians, research technical proficiency in future. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage all the contributors to continue their knowledge and skill for the benefit of the society and also hope that such more academic activities (seminar, workshop etc.) will be organized by Women's College in the days to come.

mSarma
15.9.2018
(Smt. Manidipa Debbarma)
Principal
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Preface

The importance of youth could never be disparaged. They are the workforce of the nation building its present and moulding its future. The zealous involvement of youth in nation building and their overall progress decides the fate of a nation and its future generations. In that sense the actual development of the youth is manifested through their active participation in the areas of economic activity, education, employment, cultural participation and social change and development.

The theme of this book, "Tribal Youth in Tripura: Issues, Challenges and Perspectives" is particularly significant for a state like Tripura where tribal population comprises of about 34% of the total population along with a huge ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversities. The development profile of the tribes in the North-East India reveals a good example of pro-developmental attitude in terms of literacy, securing of Government jobs, utilization of educational opportunities etc., but compared to the non-tribal population they still lag far behind. Moreover, the overall development process in tribal areas remains uneven.

Tribal communities in Tripura are basically agricultural in nature and many of them are still practising the age old traditional 'jhum' cultivation. For livelihood they mostly depend on forest even today. However, the remarkable achievements

of their youths are reflected through their representation in government offices at the higher position, teaching in university and colleges, and active participation in various democratic bodies. At the same time, basic issues on their development include not only economic prosperity but also preservation of their ethnic identity, ecology, language, culture, style of living, traditional practices, political ideas etc. Hence, it is important to en-sure expansion of qualities and capabilities of tribal folk to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold the institution accountable that affect their lives. Pertinent to this goal, a well designed education structure can be translated into wealth, power and upward mobility which rural community is usually devoid of despite possessing abundant resources and man power. Considering the multidimensionality of the issue, the actual achievement of their participation, prosperity as well as problems, need serious academic investigation. To make a contribution in this endeavour, the Department of Sociology, Women's College, Agartala, Tripura, has organized a National Seminar on "Tribal Youth in Tripura: Issues, Challenges and Perspectives" on 7th and 8th April, 2018 in collaboration with Tribal Research and Cultural Institute (TR & CI), Government of Tripura, Agartala and which was funded by Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India. The present volume is a collection of research papers presented in the seminar and subsequently revised by the authors in the light of the discussions which followed the presentations.

I truly appreciate all the scholars and contributors for their hard work and effort towards the achievement of this particular endeavour. I believe that this work will be useful to academicians, research scholars and students of different

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disciplines. This volume may serve to enhance further works to carry out more specific researches with a single goal to help and enrich the lives of tribal youths in Tripura who are caught in the web of modernity, unemployment, poverty, drug abuse, identity crises and confusion.

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Acknowledgement

The Organising Committee of the National Seminar on “Tribal Youth in Tripura: Issues, Challenges and Perspectives” thank the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi, for funding the National Seminar, and Tribal Research and Cultural Institute (TR & CI), Government of Tripura, Agartala for collaborating with us in organising the seminar. We are grateful to Sri Ratan Lal Nath, Hon’ble Minister, Education and Law, Government of Tripura for inaugurating the Seminar. We thank Sri Mevar Kumar Jamatia, Hon’ble Minister, Tribal Welfare and Forest, Government of Tripura, for his speech and presence in the inaugural programme as Guest of Honour. We also thank Sri Sunil Debbarma, Director, Tribal Research and Cultural Institute, Government of Tripura, Sri Rabindra Reang, Director, Tribal Welfare Department, Government of Tripura, Dr. B. Palit, Director, Higher Education Department, Government of Tripura, and Dr. B. Panda, Department of Sociology, North Eastern Hill University, Shillong for their speeches and also for gracing the inaugural programme as special guests.

The Organising Committee also express our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. B. Panda for delivering the keynote address. We deeply appreciate and thank Prof. Jangkhongam DOUNGEL, Department of Political Science, Mizoram University, Dr. R.K. Debbarma, Assistant Professor, Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, School

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of Social Sciences and Humanities, Cuwahati, and Dr. Rajeev Dubey, Department of Sociology, Tripura University for their presence and participation throughout the seminar as resource persons and for chairing the technical sessions during the seminar.

We also extend our sincere thanks to Tribal Research and Cultural Institute (TR & CI), Government of Tripura, Agartala, for their patience and cooperation in organizing the seminar and working with us to bring out and publish this volume.

We deeply appreciate the effort put forward by all the scholars who have contributed their valuable papers for this publication. I do thank Prof. Jangkhongam Doungel, for sincerely and tirelessly working with me throughout the process of editing this volume.

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Tribal Youths in Tripura : Issues, Problems and Prospects

B. Panda

Introduction

Development of a society depends on various socio-economic factors. Therefore, all these factors need to be weighed and analysed before setting priorities and devising appropriate strategies for integrated and inclusive development. The integrated development of a society is possible only when people across the social categories irrespective of ethnicity, caste, tribe, gender and age actively participate and contribute towards the development process. It becomes all the more important for the disadvantaged sections of the society to participate in the development process as their larger and wider participation can help achieving inclusive development. Therefore, it becomes imperative for the tribals to get actively involved in the development process particularly, when they constitute a significant segment of population in the given society.

Youths form the important and crucial segment of a society and therefore, their active involvement in the development process assumes significance. They could significantly contribute towards inclusive and integrated development through their innovative ideas, dynamism and skills. However, different socio-cultural constraints come their way which prevent and restrain them to actively participate in the development process though their participation in the development process remains crucial.

Hence, the factors which are detrimental for active participation of youths in the process of development need to be identified and special efforts should be made to overcome these shortcomings which will not only encourage them to be integral part of the development process but also create much needed confidence in them.

The participation of youths, their contributions towards achieving inclusive development in North-East India assumes significance. North-East India is home to diverse tribal communities with distinct ethnic values, cultural diversities and interests wherein each tribal community strives to protect the interest and identity of its own. In the event of discrimination and relative deprivation, it therefore, becomes quite natural for the communities to resort to the reactionary tactics. They become assertive and protective about their socio-cultural identity, their survival and existence. Apart from physiographical condition of the region that delimits the opportunities, the socio-cultural diversity and political issues even make the development process more challenging. Like other North-Eastern states, Tripura, a state where diverse tribal communities reside too faces various challenges of development. The social compositions of population, limited resources, geographical location and governance issues are some of the reasons which severely affect the developmental aspirations and patterns of development thereby making the development process more challenging. It may be noted here that 'even an abundance of physical and natural resources, machinery and capital may go underutilized or misused, if human resources factors are not adequately cultivated and managed' (Sinha, 2004: 489). Hence, human resources and formation of social capital need to be promoted.

The youth which forms an important and crucial component of human resource need to be nurtured, their energies need to be properly channelled and their concerns should be given adequate attention so that their creative talents are not underutilised. Economic prosperity, development and human development can only be achieved when human resource, natural resources and technological innovations (tools and machineries) are integrated and properly utilized.

Youths - The Defining Stage of Life

The youths can be considered as the backbone of a society as the well-being of youths reflects the well-being of the society. Biologically, the youth can be defined as a group of persons who belong to the age group of sixteen to twenty-four (Landis 1941:737). According to UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization), the youth constitutes people between fifteen and twenty four years of age. The government of India defines youth as persons who belong to the age group of fifteen to thirty five years of age (Ministry of Youth and Sports Affair 2003, Amarjeet Singh 2002 cited in Nongkynrih, 2009:369). Pointing out the social significance of youth, Nongkynrih asserted that though age is taken as the determining factor to define the youth, one can also observe that youth is construed as a social category and a 'generational principle' i.e., youths are defined through a specific term which signifies the social status in the society. For instance, the terms such as *Samla* or *Khynraw* for Khasi-Jaintia, *Lhotimi* for Sumi-Naga, *Lanor* for Ao-Naga, *Chabuan* for Rongmei-Naga, *Chadambe* for Garo, *Tleirawl* for Mizo, *Ratlai* for Hrangkhawl, *Tulai* for Paite, *Yaming* for Adi signify their social significance. Thus, definition of youth can broadly be categorised into two: i. rational legal definition which is based

on demographic factor, i.e. age ii. social category definition which is based on social construction through perception and generational principle (ibid.). Psychologically, youth could be perceived as a stage in life that arrives after a prolonged period of infancy. Sociologically, this is the stage that bridges the gap between dependent childhood and self-sufficient adulthood. It therefore, can be perceived as the transitional phase of life between childhood and adulthood and during this phase youths as an individual entity as well as a social category struggle with difficult problems (Landis 1941:737).

As the youths reach the adult stage, they face various difficulties to adjust and cope with the changing phase of life such as i. economic adjustment ii. moral adjustment iii. marital adjustment (Landis 1941: 738). Such problems are probably more intense during youth than in any other period of life (Kerister, 1970: 637). At the consciousness level, perhaps the central issue during youth is the tension between self and society. The awareness of actual or potential conflict, disparity, lack of harmony between what one is (one's identity, values, integrity) and the resources and demands of the existing society are some of tensions observed during this stage (ibid.:636). Another special aspect during this stage of life is the enormous value placed upon certain attributes such as change, transformation and the movement which make them vulnerable to stability as they undergo rapid changes in life (ibid., 638).

Since youths confront various socio-economic problems and become susceptible, the process of socialization assumes significance. The role of family, educational and other social institutions become extremely significant to redress the stress, strain, anxieties and various difficulties that the youths face. As

agents of socialization these institutions play crucial roles through which the youths imbibe values, behaviours and moral principles. It is pertinent in this context to delve into the issue of tribal development before we discuss the problems and prospects of tribal youths.

Tribal Development: Some Issues

When we analyse and critically examine the status of tribal youths, we must delve into the notion of tribal development. Tribal economy in India can be divided into two broad categories i.e., the nature of economy which is characterised as i. hill or forest dwelling ii. plain or valley dwelling. While the principal source of the first type of economy is based on shifting cultivation with supplementary sources of fishing, food gathering; the second type of economy draws its resources from settled cultivation with supplementary sources of horticulture and livestock (Rath, 2006:34). Over the period of time, though changes have taken place in the tribal society, they still suffer from relative deprivation. The disparity between the tribal and non-tribal population persists. One may explain this persisting gap through the notion of dominant relations. Andre Gunder Frank 1969 (cited in Rath 2006:17) articulated the continuing disparity has accentuated the dominant relationships and reinforced the unequal exchange between super and subordinate groups. Though several initiatives have been taken towards growth and development, overall development in tribal areas remain uneven. Tribal communities also witness unequal land owing structure. The exogenous model of development is considered inappropriate as it leads to displacement, affecting their subsistence economy. Rath (2006:23-24) articulates the development pattern and perception towards the process of tribal

development and classified it into three broad types. These are: positive response, negative response and suggestive response.

i. Positive response refers to the achievements of the ongoing development process as well as predictions made on its future development.

ii. Negative response refers to negative effects of development. It is critical of ensuing development process and argues that development induced displacement only adds to the misery of the tribals. It further argues that the transitory and short term development would not likely to end the plight of the tribals.

iii. Suggestive response though critical of the ensuing development process, it does not focus on negative aspects of development. Though critical of the development process it presents an array of remedial measures (ibid).

Diverse developmental strategies have been adopted with regard to tribal development in India. One can observe a shift from 'growth with social justice to 'development with empowerment' (Mohanty 2001 cited in Rath 2006:17). Tribals today want to be self-sufficient and enterprising and decisive. It is in this context, processes of social change and the impact and influence that the forces of social change have brought to the life of tribals assume significance. For instance, globalization has brought significant change in the socio-cultural life of the people.

Globalization has brought along with it a new socio-economic and cultural package which has affected the socio-cultural and economic spheres of the society. The effects of globalization have also entered the tribal hinterland. The new developments such as migration, transportation, information and communication technology have made people more mobile. Changes have taken place in consumption pattern too. In these changing

circumstances, it is pertinent to ponder over queries such as what happens to the sustenance economy of tribals when it comes in contact with these changes? has the tribal economy diversified? can tribals be indifferent to the ensuing changes? how do they react to the economic and cultural changes which are taking place around them? what happens to the regional identity as globalization reaches the grassroots? what happens to local culture when globalization brings, as Appadurai articulates, transformative changes in ethnoscape, technoscape and mediascape? how a meaningful egalitarian and mutual exchange of culture takes place while maintaining the distinctive features of one's own culture? how the cultural distinctiveness is maintained? These are the issues need to be critically examined when we try to perceive the problems and prospects of tribal youths. Emile Durkheim has made a distinction between mechanical solidarity - the solidarity of resemblance and organic solidarity - the solidarity of difference. When transition takes place from mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity, societies undergo transition. New moral consensus emerges which accommodates the expectations of people and the things expected from their life-world (Slattery 2006 cited in Nongkynrih, 2009: 376). For instance, the loss of youth dormitories in the context of tribal societies in the North-East can be examined from this theoretical perspective which can help us to examine how these institutions have given way to new socialising institutions to create a sense of belongingness and cohesiveness among the youths. One can cite the impact of globalization that has brought significant change in the economic structure too, for instance, traditional market system. Traditional weekly markets have taken a shape of global markets which have become a centre of

exchanging the surplus, bring solidarity and devise innovations (Jain 2001:18).

As the directed development strategy brings growth and development among tribals, it also creates class system and class inequality negating the principle of egalitarian principle. Further, one should critically examine the emergence of tribal elites and how the creamy layer creates structural inequality in the society? While one has to critically look at the issue of exploitation of tribals by non-tribals, this social dynamics also needs to be addressed. In political sphere, the political identity has become an important assertive force; as a result, North-East India has witnessed inter-ethnic struggles and conflicts. Studies have shown how this has led to tensions and significantly affected the youths. Another aspect which needs to be addressed is the gender discrimination and gender-stereotypes which create unequal societal condition. The gender inequality embedded in the value system (beliefs, cultural practices, rituals) and personality (motivation, role taking) system deprive women to have equal access to the opportunities. Molynoux 1985, (cited in Jain 2005) makes a distinction between women's 'practical needs' and 'strategic interests'. While practical needs relate to the biological aspects and the conditions of life that include living, workload of women in everyday life, the strategic interests arise from the women's subordination to men. Therefore, intense societal and administrative interventions are needed to effectively address gender discrimination to achieve integrated development.

Development in North-East : Constraints and Opportunities

Despite its abundant natural and human resources North-East India faces various developmental constraints. Apart from unavoidable physiographic features and landscape, diverse socio-

cultural and political problems also at times create problems for the growth and development of the region. Lack of economic opportunities and unemployment has led to the increasing pauperisation of tribal youths. Therefore, the problems of youth cannot be seen as an isolated problem rather it should be addressed by locating these problems within the broader socio-cultural, political and economic context. Apart from massive investment to create physical infrastructure such as transport and communication, efforts should also be made to identify priority areas which can accrue greater benefits. To accelerate the process of development a multipronged strategy needs to be devised. Some of the crucial strategies which need to be considered before developing an integrated and comprehensive approach are :

- i. encouraging open debate on development priorities and holistic understanding of the problem
- ii. increasing emphasis need to be given to tertiary sector apart from primary and secondary sectors
- iii. making efforts to identify anxieties, concerns and psychological indecisiveness
- iv. addressing identity, security and peace issues to overcome uncertainties with regard to development initiatives. It is in this context it is pertinent to discuss the psychological approach to the process of economic development which suggests that a society with high level of achievement will produce more energetic entrepreneurs. McClelland's formulation on need for achievement found positive correlation between need for achievement and the rate of economic growth (McClelland 1961, cited in Beugelsdijk, and Smeets 2008: 916). The favourable economic factors such as availability of capital, access to markets, labour supply, raw materials, and technology and 'non-economic

factors such as social norms and beliefs, psychological motivations for achievement, the legitimacy of entrepreneurship' create favourable conditions for development of entrepreneurship in society (Berger, 1992 cited in Ganguly 1998: 29).

While these indicators are important to achieve economic goals one must also keep in mind that each tribe has its own cultural world-view. Music, dance, song, folktales, myths are distinct to each other. Fear of losing socio-cultural identity is also paramount among them as the new forces of social change creep into the society. Their orientation towards development, proprieties, their traditional ways of understanding a problem need to be taken into account.

The Context of Tripura

Tripura a North-Eastern state of India also suffers from development syndrome. As a state with multi-ethnic communities, it deserves a special care and attention. Tribals form a significant proportion of the total population of Tripura (31.1% in 2001 and this state presents a bewildering collection of tribal groups. Out of the 19 enlisted tribes found in the state, eight (Tripuri, Kiang, Noatia, Jamatia, Halam, Kuki, Chaimal and Uchai) are regarded as the original settlers and they constituted nearly 86% of Tripura's population in 2001. Tripuris are the largest in number with 54.7% of the tribal population in 2001 followed by the Kiang (16.6%) Jamatia (7.5%) Chakma (6.5%) Halam (4.8%) Mog (3.1%) and others (Ghosh and Choudhuri 2011: 74). Out of the total tribal population in Tripura, tribal youth constitutes 33.13 percent against 35.5 percent of total youth population in the state as per 2001 census. The proportion of rural population of tribal youth was 96.7 per cent while urban youth was merely 3.3 per cent against the total youth population in the state was 81.73 per

cent rural and 18.27 urban areas respectively (Darlong and Debbarma, 2014:74).

Development in Tripura: Constraints and Opportunities

The development in general and developmental issues relating to tribal youths in Tripura can broadly be classified into two i.e., structural and policy issues and socio-cultural issues. Both these issues need to be addressed effectively to achieve integrated development.

The Structural and Policy Issues

Lack of opportunity and equal access to the available resources, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of work culture always affect the process of growth and development. Infrastructure i.e. transportation, communication technology widens the scope and opportunities and provides added advantage to the growth and development. Without proper infrastructure, development process cannot be accelerated. Similarly, lack of access to capital, local entrepreneur's inability to seize the available opportunities are some of the problems that also come on the way of development process in the state.

Though agriculture is the mainstay of the economy in Tripura, the prevailing traditional practices and methods however, do not fetch the desired growth in this sector (Sinha and Chakraborty 2010:21). Horticulture though has better prospects, the lack of market access to farmers create added problems for them. These unavoidable constraints subsequently discourage the investors to invest their energy, time and resources further in this sector. Unfavourable industrial climate, predominance of unorganized sector, traditional and village based industries also inhibit the absorption of the workers into secondary sector (ibid.).

The emergence of class based agrarian structure in Tripura has impoverished most of the tribals as they struggle against emerging inequality and competitiveness. Lack of education further delimits the opportunity particularly for white-collar jobs and deprives youths to hold government positions which in turn curtail their access to decision-making process. Studies have shown that despite the primary sector gradually being declined and tertiary sector is gradually growing, this is not reflected in occupational structure, hence occupational structure does not coincide with sectoral change (ibid.:25). Reforms need to be introduced in horticulture cash crops without disturbing the sustenance economy of tribals. Efforts should be made to revamp horticulture, plantations, animal husbandry and planned forestry which would yield better returns and generate employment. Secondary and tertiary sectors need to be strengthened to generate employment. Lack of participation of tribals in the tea garden, Rubber and Gas based industries shows their general apathy in the industrial sector (Devbarman 1998: 239). Micro finance and formation of SHGs have emerged as an effective mechanism to inculcate the financial discipline and financial management among the poor besides encouraging them to pursue collective endeavour through entrepreneurial activities. Therefore, efforts should be made to create opportunities in secondary and tertiary sectors to absorb the manpower and address the problem of unemployment. Considering the marketability, manpower ability, demand pattern and the existing constraints, the most appropriate areas for small scale industries should be forest based, agro based, livestock based, gas based and service sector based (Chakraborty, 2004 cited in Sinha and Chakraborty 2010: 66).

Through entrepreneurship, youths not only take the risks to promote themselves and eke out their livelihood but also create employment opportunities for others. However, suitable conditions such as counselling and guidance, confidence boosting trainings, initial seed money and loan facilities to a great extent will generate enthusiasm and hope among the youths. Training is one of the key aspects for developing entrepreneurship as it could increase entrepreneurial spirit and skills, provide scope for self development, motivation and contribute to rapid economic growth. Therefore, efforts should be made towards imparting training to the youths so that they can acquire requisite skills. Further, skill based training can provide much needed confidence to the youths. A skilled youth can further use his/her creativity to excel in the areas of his/her choice which in turn can create spiral effect on others and motivate them to get involved in the skilled development programmes. Micro enterprises can play a significant role in creating job opportunities for the youths particularly to the first generation entrepreneurs. This is where educational system which instils the enthusiasm, commitment and motivation assumes significance. Issues relating to school enrolment and dropout need to be taken care of as dropouts from the educational system create adverse effects on youths. While the problems faced by urban and rural youths are equally important, lack of access to various opportunities in rural areas deprive the youths in rural areas more. Therefore, problems of rural youths needs to be highlighted and special attention need to be given for their well-being.

To achieve better human development, mere economic development is not enough. Efforts need to be made to create

social capital, and robust health facilities. Another area which needs special attention is the handicraft and handloom sector. The state has diverse ethnic, sub ethnic groups with distinct craftsmanship. The hidden talents need to be discovered, artistic minds need to be nurtured, encouraged and promoted. This, to a great extent can be achieved when handicraft and handloom sectors are given priority. Intense efforts are required to promote the handicraft and handloom products as these will yield steady economic returns besides nurturing their creativity and skill. Therefore, the combination of factors such as increase in agricultural productivity, gradual growth in secondary sector, increasing emphasis on technical or vocational education, entrepreneurship training programmes are important which will widen the economic and professional opportunities as well as empower youths who can set priorities and goals and make sincere efforts to achieve these goals.

Socio-cultural issues

The integrated and inclusive growth is possible in the society when there is wider participation of people across social categories. This is possible when they get equal opportunities to get involved in the development process. One such problem is the gender disparity. The active participation of women in the development process will increase the inclusiveness. Therefore initiatives should be taken to ensure gender parity. The spirit of competitiveness a sense of purpose and critical awareness on the problems, priorities and opportunities are always crucial for potential entrepreneurs. Hence, efforts should be made both at government as well as non-government levels to create awareness on diverse aspects of development and human development and convince them that the development

initiatives are not antithetical to their tradition and culture. Hence, fear of losing identity, cultural heritage, traditional and customary practices is dispelled.

The other concerns which need to be kept in mind in the context of North-East India in general and Tripura in particular are: i. North-East India being a bio-diversity zone demands a distinct and unique strategy for development giving priority to cottage industries, horticulture, floriculture, sericulture and aquaculture, ii. The problems and priorities for youths in urban areas and youths in rural areas need to be identified and prioritized and separate plans, schemes need to be devised, iii. innovative ideas can bring transformative changes in the domain of development. Therefore, innovative ideas need to be encouraged, untapped resources need to be properly utilized and efforts should be maximized to create a work culture which would bring competitive spirit among youths. Pointing out the importance of work culture in the context of North-East, Ray and Baishya (1998: 14) observed that though there are rapid changes in form of population growth, expansion of economic activities such as market, new consumerism, expansion of middle class what is lacking is work culture. There is antipathy to take up innovative developmental programmes and there is lack of initiatives for manufacturing, trade and commerce. The heavy dependence on agriculture implies that the secondary and tertiary sectors have not developed in the desired manner.

The collaborative strategies and joint ventures of civil society organizations particularly the youth organizations and government can help to bring transformative changes in the development domain and the life of the youths. The youth organizations can play a very significant role to create a sense

of belongingness and motivation among the youths. Sirha (1995:32) pointing out the importance of youth forums argued that the youth forums in North East India are not uni functional as the same members are found in different organizations even though he categorised these into six broad categories such as students, welfare, religious, political, sports and recreational and professional. The youth organizations can also contribute significantly to create a sense of confidence among the youths by providing suitable platforms to express their creative talents. As Hooja (1995:160) articulated, 'over time, the youth associations can be the building ground for entrepreneurs and leaders' from their community.

Conclusion

It is imperative to perceive the issues relating to tribal youth i.e., the prospects, opportunities and challenges from diverse perspectives. The various intricacies of tribal development such as ensuing socio-cultural changes in tribal societies, prevailing developmental paradigm pursued by the state, relative deprivation and distinct tribal identity need to be examined systematically. Multiple methodological approaches and tools i.e., qualitative and quantitative, survey and case studies, ethnography need to be applied to develop a comprehensive understanding on the diverse aspects of tribal youths.

I have presented some of these issues which I believe will be discussed in this seminar. I am sure the seminar will also include other related issues which are not included in this address and will provide ample opportunity to deliberate on such issues.

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2

Being and Time : A Reflection on New Epistemological Agenda for Contemporary Tripura

R. K. Debbarma

I want to begin with two refusals. One, in the inauguration session of this seminar¹, the dignitaries – which included politicians and top bureaucrats of the state – list out the following as major challenges faced by tribal youths: alcoholism, drug abuse, and lack of interest in education. I refuse to frame the topic this way for two reasons. First, alcoholism, drug addiction and lack of interest in education are universal problem, they are not particular to tribal youths alone. I am not saying one should not try to resolve this problems, but that framing of tribals this way leads into highly problematic which brings to my second reason. This can easily slide into blaming culture, instead of institutional and structural, which can mutate into racist discourse.

Two, I refuse to frame the problem in isolation. That is you cannot understand challenges of tribals without understanding challenges faced by non-tribals. In this paper, using this dialectical framework, I would like to talk about challenge of a different kind – the challenge of creating knowledge, of knowledge producers. If our task is to produce new knowledge about Tripura, our focus cannot be restricted to challenges of tribal youths alone. We would need to engage with challenges of non tribal youths

¹ National Seminar on “Tribal Youth in Tripura: Issues, Challenges and Perspectives,” Women’s College, Agartala.

as well, because they are related, they co-determined. We will need to understand them in terms of dialectics.

The reflection I have on mind is the nature of Being and Time. By being I mean how do we understand ourselves and others? By time I mean how do we understand our relationship with each other? What should be the nature of that relationship. Both these questions are important in that they impinge on our understand of the place called Tripura., which have had enormous consequences on the shape of politics in the state.

So what is this being that I am speaking about? In 2007, when I began my PhD work, I came to Tripura to collect available writings on Tripura. I went back with about 20 or so published books, and few non published materials by various individuals and groups. I remember reading with eagerness those material. One common way of writing about tribals was that they are cultural beings, subjects of customs, whereas others a subjects of law proper. This view gets reflected in the celebration of cultural dance, dress etc., more importantly the insistence on culture requiring protection (think of how various group impose cultural dress on women). Culture becomes something of frozen in time, insulated, and distinct.

Distinct culture is a misnomer. A culture becomes one through relationships, not only between members who believe that they share a culture, but also with those who are seen as belonging to different culture. The challenge then is to think how we owe culturally to one another, another culture. Our task then, as knowledge producers, should be directed towards this.

Tribals as 'subject without history', non tribals as 'subject with history' who had the assurance of history. This cultural being as occupying behind time, backward, needing help of the subject

with assurance of history (think about the how Tripura state defines certain group as primitive tribe?)

One way of contesting this dichotomy – subjects without history and subjects with history – has been the notion of fateful time immemorial, which actually would mean timelessness. A politics that flow from this idea of time immemorial is fraught with numerous dangers.

To bind history to a place, to a people not only makes it possible to think history in binary, but also helps unlock the access to a past named as time immemorial. Two dominant ways of writing thinking history in Tripura has been: a. Tripura's history as history of the Tripuri people. b. History of Tripura as history of connection to Bengal. I am not saying these are wrong and should be rejected, but that they should be brought into dialectic.

History cannot be contained within borders. History is not ours alone, but product of our encounter, we need to care, when we write history, for this another who is co-constitutive of history. The challenge for us, then, is invest producing knowledge about how we are co-constituted by history.

This would mean critique of the two dominant ways of writing history of Tripura. In order to rethink this Being and Time, we need a a critique of the relationship between history and community, especially of history which demands our absolute relationship to a past.

The dialectics, I mentioned in the beginning consist in understanding the dialectic of so called alienated tribal youth and the anxiety of those came to settle in Tripura. Such knowledge should foster creation of a place where both feel at home. You cannot do a politics of expelling, or you can you make this a Bengali state. This is the real challenge in contemporary Tripura.

Our task then has to be directed against against prevailing knowledge about Tripura – the dominant and the rival – to take them together and rub them against each other, a sort of dialectical rub, to bring forth a new narrative.

Memory, history and identity

This happened in the December of 2015. I was a guest at the New Year 'Tring' celebration at Takarjala, organised by Twipra Students Federation (TSF). As a guest, I was expected to speak in praise of the glorious past of the Tripuris, to which the event owed its origin. As the celebration progressed into the cold winter night, each dignitaries (almost all of them men, in their long overcoats) screamed out past glories of the Tripuri people – a glorious past originating in timeimmemorial.

All of them, instructing to those who were present there about of glorious past, and inviting us to be proud member of the community; and at the same time invoking our sacred duty to pay back to the community – to help it rise from the suppressed present. The occasion was simultaneously one of mourning the present political condition – dispossession of indigenous people from political power.

From the warmth of my sofa on a well-decorated platform, I watched the crowd who were seated on the fallow paddy field, wrapped in their shawls and eagerly awaiting for the 'culture' to come alive with songs and dances – to blast away the chill of the night. I was the one who froze.

I froze, because my own past – as a member of the nationalist Twipra Students' Federation – I had been a subject of that glorious history, a subject of this way of looking at the past. I do not remember how and where I had learned this history (like everyone present there I probably learned it through cultural

events). But this way of thinking about past, and my own subjectivity in it had come to confront me, like a specter. I was there because of my own past, but I could no longer speak of history in the absolute, linear, homogeneous, and immemorial narrative. In fact, I think we were all there embroiled with our individual pasts and our subjectivity to that glorious collective past. After all we are creatures of our own creation. We are our own Frankenstein's monster. That history, to which I was complicit in believing and reinforcing, now stares back like a dark monster, lurking around us in the dark winter night. Was my cultural consciousness shot through historical consciousness?

History leaves wreckages along its path. Sometimes the wreckages are the assured subjects of that history. I could no longer speak in praise of the glorious past, which I once did. Not only because such a past now looks strange to me, how this past is serviced into mobilising rage against the other-enemy and its own dissenting members. And when anger of fellow-members turns against their own, the violence administered is most visceral.² My membership to that community or at least to that small group of that history's subjects is now one of ambivalent attachment – a collective is neither all-good or all-bad, and in Klein's formulation, membership to a group combines both care and guilt.³ I believe there is a political lesson in that.

The event described above throws up three inter-related questions regarding nature of community⁴ and the kind of our

² Doris Lessing makes a compelling case about the nature of community in this book, *Prison We Chose to Live Inside*, 1987.

³ Isaac Balbus, "Mourning the Movement" in *Soundings*, Issue 14, 2000.

⁴ I would be using the word community here to denote ethnic or nation. I chose to use to community in order to eschew the limitations imposed by nation or ethnic.

politics. If mourning and the inability to mourn creates us as certain political subjects, what kinds of political subjects this simultaneity brings into play? Is this simultaneity a strategy for retaining one's capacity for political action when confronted with a State that refuse to recognise this mourning of loss, grief and rupture? What does this political grief tell us about the community's relationship to history? I plan to engage with this set of questions by framing Tripura as a settler colony.⁵ I find this frames analytically rewarding not only because of the explanatory power it bestows on the context, but the frame also helps trouble the longing for idealised past on the part of the indigenous communities, and also reveal hegemonic power associated with settler anxiety.

Historical Consciousness as wound?

No one believes its myth as historical truth more than the subjects of nationalist history. Sometimes, their myths are created out of the earlier myths, whose history the nationalist lay claim to as its own.

Tring encapsulates this myth within a myth. The event reclaims the story of Hamtor Fa's victory against a ruler of Bengal. The name and the said un-date-able event is mentioned in passing in the chronicle of Manikya dynasty known as Rajmala. The event is reclaimed as the foundation of history of Tripuri nation, because, to commemorate that particular victory, Hamtor Fa is believed to have established the Twpra Era of Tipperah Era (TE). This Era was used by the Tripura State till 1960s, when it was

⁵ For a brief outline on this frame see R K Debbarma. "Agarjala as a Settler-colonial Town", *The Newsletter*, No. 77, Summer, 2017 [IIAS, Leiden].

replaced with Bangabda/Bengali calendar. The significance of this sketchy, obscure, and non-date-able event mentioned in the chronicle lie in political trajectory of Tripura in the post-British-India period. The metamorphosis of Tripura as a settler-colony space.

It is within this frame – the becoming of the place as settler-colony – one has to locate the significance of this new event which came to be named and celebrated as Tring or Tripuri New Year. The present event, Tring, and the event it commemorates troubles the history and narrative of belonging and space in Tripura. This appropriation of an event from Tripura's dim past unsettles the assurance history gives to the settler society and its ideological structures. However, this mining of the chronology, which in itself is tainted by myths former ruling class told about their power to themselves, is a shift from the older and popular myth of origin Tripuris tell about themselves – the myth of Dongoi Ma – Dongoi Fa. One possible reason for this shift might be the desire to articulate historical merit of the new collective. While the myth of Dongoi Ma – Dongoi Fa resides in shared folklore or orality, the myth of Hamtor Fa is a written historical trace. As such, their historical consciousness, if one may called this desire for historical merit, demands the projection of the self into time-immemorial so as to contest what ideological basis of settler colony denies to them or repudiates. I will come back to this later.

But the subversive potentials contained in the invention of this new New Year, in so far as it disturbs the happy settler's story – story of its civilising presence on the indigenous communities and the land – is foreclosed by its own relationship to history and its dogmatic vision of future. In the end, their use

of history is no different from the way settler society use history of the place.

Such use of history, to quote Nietzsche, merely instructs us instead of orienting us towards life. If history instantiates the conscious collective⁶, the very process consign a slice of truth of about itself in the realm of the unconscious. After all history cannot be contained within borders, it percolate/permeate through our borders, no matter how much we desire to contain it by erecting fences and posts, making each of us subjects of histories, formed by connection and mutualities.

This paper, then is a critique of the relationship between history and community, especially of the history which demands our absolute relationship to a past, to that historically conscious collective.

Such a task is urgent and difficult. Urgent, because, the defenders of such history no longer hide in far away camps and issue dictates from their hideouts or maraud the streets as lynch mobs, calling out for unity and protection of culture. They also now hide in nooks and crannies of social media as troll armies, self styled warriors of culture and defenders of history, waging battles against those who dissent against such a vision of the community.⁷ Difficult, because, imagining history in terms of unique and distinct culture and time immemorial past has been a defense against hegemonic power, who wield extractive and

⁶ Nicholas Dirks, "History As A Sign Of The Modern", in *Public Culture*, Vol. 2, No. 2: Spring 1990.

⁷ Yengkhorn Jilangamba, *A People without History: Colonialism and the Historical Legacy of Ethnic Classification*, in *Biblio*, May-June 2008. See for example Riot Collective, *Misogynist Dictats and Nationalist Hubris*, October 31, 2017.

bureaucratic power complicit in material dispossession of the indigenous communities. How does one carry out a critique of this history without harming the power of the subjugated, and refusal to serve the power which dispossesses?

I would like to sketch here that, in the settler colony, for the indigenous, since they have been historically described as occupying behind time, to be conscious collective is to be historically wounded subjects. To be aware of the other, the opposed other, albeit the template on which one must fashion oneself requires a possession of time immemorial, a memory whose content cannot be altered without injuring the consciousness which it constitutes and is constituted by. (This is not to say that time immemorial contains a history created out of nothing, or that history is what we make it to be). The very self it imagines of itself or brings into consciousness is designed after a template already existing, already rendering it behind time. That community is merely a template community, forever seeking to heal the wound through repayment, service and sacrifice.

This historical consciousness as a wound is counterpoised against a history founded on repudiation of similar consciousness on indigenous body, and thereby render them always behind time. This repudiation takes places in academia, media, political speeches, quotidian life, and forever marking these bodies as requiring direction.⁸ Thus this historical consciousness as a wound begins with the identification of loss,

⁸ Here I am influenced by Sanjay Barbora's description of Northeast as 'directional category'. His focus is on larger spatial scale, the relationship between Indian state and the northeast region. "Under the Invisible Cloak : Reimagining the Northeast," *Biblio- A Review of Books*, Vol. XIII, Nos. 5 and 6, May-June 2008.

which must be mourned, and the disavowal by hegemonic settler state inaugurates the the making of melancholic subjects who desires to be like the settler state. Such a memory and the politics it embody must be challenged because this is a politic desires in its subjects melancholic love for the community so constituted.

Mourning the collective into existence

The problem of history in northeast India has not been confined to absence of written records, but the written records are in themselves problem of history. They cannot be treated as merely evidence or proof for unique culture or history. This problem with historical writing in the region has been pointed out by Jilangamba, who insist that scholars using archives should take care not to reproduce colonial descriptions, and the need for democratisation of history as a discipline.⁹ He also hinted at the need to done away with the binary of historical people and people without history. That task is best left to professional historians. My concern here is the politics of that binary. This binary is a product of power, and serves that power, which makes possible for certain form of power, especially colonising power to be established. In the context of this paper, that power is wield of the settler society, initially wielded by the colonial anthropology, and later by the settler society.

The settler was the subject of history, whereas the indigenous was the subject of culture within which they were designated as autonomous and distinct, and the preservation of which activates

⁹ Yengkhom Jilangamba, "The Machination of Empire," review essay in *Biblio: A Review of Books*, Vol. XIX, Nos. 7 and 8, September-October 2014.

settler colonial relationship. Settlers were subjects of the law, whereas indigenous were subjects of customs within which they were produced as distinct unit of analysis. The frames of binary which legitimates colonial, or other forms of hegemonic relationship is treacherous terrain owing to the inherent instability between time and meaning, and memory and history. Together, these two unstable relationships (time-meaning and memory-history) can serve as basis for certain form of collective consciousness which the communities who are denied history can wield against the hegemonic communities. The mobilisation of time-immemorial as resource of collective memory needs to be placed in this phenomenon.

This is because what time does to meaning, and how meaning changes the conception of time is never given. More importantly, while history demands a linear, progressive narrative, memory do not wish to remain slave to chronology. Memory seeks out for the easiest way out, and memory is afraid of the messy entanglement of our politics. Yet it is the easiest way out which invites and mete out violences, while messy entanglement instantiates our vulnerabilities, complicities, and the precariousness of our existence.

How does one critique the a memory which the subjugated wields against a power that arrogate for itself 'true time', and forever renders others 'behind time'? To pose such a question is to articulate a refusal on two fronts: One, a refusal to be burdened by the historical weight of the division into true time and behind time; and a refusal to be trapped by the dark monster lurking around us with its threatening glare to devour. The task, then, as Walter Benjamin envisaged, is to rescue history from conformism, to which is entangled our own liberation.

To articulate the past historically does not mean to recognise the way it really was. It means to siege hold of memory as it flashes up at the movement of danger. Historical materials wish to retain that image of the past which unexpectedly appears to man, single out by history at the movement of danger, that danger affect both the content of tradition and its receivers, the same threat hangs over both, that of becoming a tool of the ruling classes. In every era the attempt must be made to wrest tradition away from conformism that is about to overpower it.¹⁰

History enables imaginings, and as well as resist imaginations, in so far as the content of the imagination is dissent. History is easier, if its task is to fashion national consciousness, a consciousness whose very purpose is sacrificed at the very moment of its birth, because its debut is marked by violence of the status-quo. To bind history to a place, to a people not only makes it possible to think of people without history and people with history; but also helps unlock the access to a past named as 'time immemorial'. Time immemorial is that fateful memory where events are locked away and whose content can no longer be altered without having violent implications on those to whom it enables voice of resistance. The difficult task of a historian is to chisel away on the constraints of imaginations, to breathe life into the wreckages piling up at the feet of the Angel of History.¹¹ This is an uphill task because it must faced up to the larger agents of history who are equal participants in the production of history.

¹⁰ Howard Elland and Michael Jennings (eds), *Walter Benjamin: Selected writings (Vol. 4), 1938-1940*, The Belknap Press: Cambridge.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

For history is not necessarily the domain of professional historians, to quote Michel Trouillet, there are those who take history in their hands and live it.¹²

History then is produced, lived and acted upon at multiple sites, beyond the control of professional historians who subject themselves to disciplinary epistemological and ontological constraints.¹³ These are the sites, such as the event under consideration here, where history and 'culture' merge into knotted seams, whose production is irrevocably bound up with each other. The fateful history of assigning 'culture' to the indigenous and arrogating history for the settler comes back to haunt the settler self. The indeterminacy of relationship between time-meaning and history-memory enables the subjugated self to re-enact that relationship, one in which the assurances of history is denied to the settler self. If the settler state instrumentalised culture as unproblematic category and hijacked it to institute and perpetuate state power of certain kind, it is now serviced by the indigenous for politically conservative causes. For the subjugated communities, to be historical subject is to be cultural being. Tring as an event encapsulates this problematic. Every year, on the night of December 21, people are called upon to not only live a history but also to live a culture, as

¹² Michel Trouillot, *Silencing the past: power and Production of History*, Bacon Press: Boston, 1995.

¹³ For a brilliant take on historical production see Michel Trouillot, *Silencing the past: power and Production of History*, Bacon Press: Boston, 1995. For a brief sketch about historical production in the northeast region, see Yengkhom Jilangamba, *A people without history: Colonialism and the historical legacy of ethnic classification*, in *Biblio*, May-June 2008.

mechanism for producing one's historical merit. A critique of time immemorial might be directed towards this cultural being.

The history which the historically conscious collective remembers as their past is a product of their present realities, of which the conscious collective self is a product.¹⁴ Therefore, a critique of our relationship to history, since that relationship is almost always infused with power, and a relationship of power, might open ways for theorising community in terms of co-determination. Such a critique also help reorient the relationship between community and its members as one of ambivalence.

In Tripura, today, what it celebrated and mourned forecloses acknowledgement by the state and settler society. The loss, which the event mourns, is unrecognised and disavowed, because such an act implicates the settler self, forever ridden with lingering anxieties about the ongoing repercussions of the foundational violence which it is guilty of

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¹⁴ Michel Foucault, *Silencing the past...*

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Situational Analysis of the Tribal Women's Health in Tripura with Focus on Adolescent Girls : A Homoeopathic Perspective

Liyi Karso

Introduction

Tripura's health care infrastructure, like most states of India, is divided into three tiers - the primary health care network, a secondary care system comprising district and sub-divisional hospitals and tertiary hospitals providing specialty and super specialty care. As on 2013-14, there are 84 Primary Health Centers, 18 Community Health Centers, 13 Sub Divisional Hospitals, 3 District Hospitals, 6 State Hospitals.¹ The situation in Tripura is better than the Indian average with respect to achievements in health and education, and in respect of the implementation of an effective system of democratic decentralization. However the population below poverty line is 34.4% as compared to the national average of 27.5% and with a high percentage of rural poverty (43.8%). This is most discerning since the tribal in Tripura are largely rural.

Women and children constitute about 67% of India's population and their health is one of the most important public health issues confronting the country today. Although there are public health efforts being taken up, yet, there is scope for

¹Official Website. Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Tripura

improving health indices. Of particular concern is the morbidity and mortality associated with childbirth in women and with infants and young children.² In tribal adolescent girls in Tripura the concerns are mainly around early marriage, early pregnancy, and anaemia. Despite the fact that the tribal women's economic roles and decision making in their household has improved, yet the prevalence of malnutrition is high.³ Keeping such concerns in view there is a need for a holistic healthcare approach and not merely symptomatic treatment.

Homoeopathy is practiced in about 80 countries either as an independent or as complementary/integrated to Modern system.⁴ It is one of the fastest growing complementary/alternative medical systems (CAM) in the world. It was first introduced in Germany and came to India in the early 19th century and has gained mass acceptance as well as official recognition. Homoeopathy is a system of medicine based on the principle of 'Similia Similibus Curentur' i.e. 'Let likes be treated by likes'. Homoeopaths treat the patient who suffers from a particular disease but not the disease per se and takes into account a range of physical, mental and lifestyle factors in patients for the selection of the medicines, besides the presenting complaints. Hence Homoeopathy is tailor made for individualised treatment.⁵ The strength of Homoeopathy lies in

²Central Council of Homeopathy Official Website,<http://ccrhindia.nic.in//admin/admin/showing.aspx?ID=3463>

³Jaweed and Khan Pastoralism: Research, Policy and Practice (2015) 5:5 <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1186/s13570-015-0026-9.pdf>

⁴Marchanda RK. Best practices in Homoeopathic research. Indian J Res Homoeopathy 2016;10:163-6

⁵Handbook on homoeopathy for mother and child care,CCRH.

its evident effectiveness as it takes a holistic approach towards the sick individual through promotion of inner balance at mental, emotional, spiritual and physical levels.⁶

The Regional Research Institute under the Central Council for Research in Homeopathy in Khumulwng has been inaugurated recently to strengthen health services and propagate alternative systems of medicine in Tripura. As of now the primary catchment area of the Institute is over 39 per cent of the tribal population of the State, living in West Tripura district.

Methodology

The paper aims to carry out a review of the tribal women's health in Tripura. There is a paucity of peer reviewed published research studies and literature of the tribal women's health. The discussion carried out in the paper draws commentaries from varied credible global, national, and state literature available online to form a case that the health of Tripura's adolescent tribal girls needs improvement for overall societal development.

Discussion

The focus on the health of adolescent tribal girls in Tripura is foremost for the future development of the State. The health problems and health-related behaviours that arise during adolescence shape adult health, with important implications for public health. For example, many of the non-communicable diseases of the adult years arise from behaviours that start, or are reinforced in adolescence, including tobacco use, harmful use of alcohol, unhealthy diets and physical inactivity.

⁶<http://ayush.gov.in/about-the-systems/homoeopathy/introduction-homoeopathy>

According to NFHS-4, the average age of marriage among rural women in Tripura is high in adolescent age group compared to other age groups and above 54% women in rural Tripura are anaemic. According to DLHS-4, average education of rural married women is primary level. Malnourished and unaware young mothers will not only lead to poorly nourished babies, but also future adults that will be at a higher risk of certain non-communicable diseases. Anaemia among pregnant women may be an underlying cause of maternal mortality, spontaneous abortion, premature births, and low birth weight. As per the Barker's hypothesis the intrauterine growth retardation, low birth weight, and premature birth have a causal relationship to the origins of hypertension, coronary heart disease, and non-insulin-dependent diabetes, in middle age.⁷

According to DLHS-4 Tripura, oral form (smokeless variety) of tobacco is more prevalent (66%) as compared to the smoking of tobacco (18%) among young adults. In general, it is observed that in Tripura use of tobacco among adults increases with age, but in contrast, declines with increase in educational status. Among the women tobacco users, while only about 4.3 % smoke, a very substantial proportion of them (65.8%) use the oral form or chew tobacco. According to NFHS - 4, Women aged 15-19 years who use any kind of tobacco is 44% and the latest survey says that 40% of Tripura's cancer patients are women owing to tobacco use.

The challenges of obtaining ideal health for tribal adolescent girls in Tripura need to be studied from a life course approach.

⁷<http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095447459>

The life course approach studies the physical and social hazards during gestation, childhood, adolescence, young adulthood and midlife that affects chronic disease risk and health outcomes in later life. Global research suggests that there are critical periods of growth and development, not just in utero and early infancy but also during childhood and adolescence, when environmental exposures do more damage to health and long-term health potential than they would at other times. The approach also points at developmental stages in childhood and adolescence when social and cognitive skills, habits, coping strategies, attitudes and values are more easily acquired than at later ages. These abilities and skills strongly influence the life course trajectories with implications for health in later life.⁸

The problem of adolescent women's health is adolescent mothers often lack knowledge, education, and experience. Keeping this in view, the programs should emphasize on approaches to overcome these relative disadvantages. Adolescent girls should be provided with vocational training and sex education to increase their autonomy, self-esteem, and decision-making abilities. Another set of challenge exists in bringing the pregnant women and the health system closer to each other.⁹

According to the UNICEF, adolescents need challenging experiences that are appropriate, diverse and sufficiently intense. All young people, in or out of school, whether low-income or affluent, need a mix of services, support and opportunities to

⁸WHO Official Website.http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/lifecourse/alc_lifecourse_training_en.pdf

⁹Rai SK, Anand K, Misra P, Kant S, Upadhyay RP. Public health approach to address maternal mortality. *Indian J Public Health* 2012;56:196-203

stay engaged. They need relevant and reliable information to make informed decisions and to understand how the choices they make will affect their lives. They need opportunities for real participation and involvement in a range of community life. The greater attention given to the care, empowerment and protection of adolescents, girls in particular is the soundest way to break the intergenerational transmission of poverty and risk.¹⁰

To obtain holistic health for adolescent tribal girls, the State could consider the homeopathic healthcare system which is inclusive of the physical and social wellbeing, combined. The strategies to integrate Homoeopathy in the public health system have been elaborately reiterated- educating the knowledge base of practitioners, improving research to build an evidence base, regulating State health policies to incorporate Homoeopathy in delivery of national health programs, regularising medical camps that also double up to provide behavioural change communication, and improving coordination with other health and allied departments.¹¹

Homoeopathy has lot to offer to the different health conditions both acute and chronic. Various public health initiatives have been taken by CCRH like National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDS) for promotion of healthy life styles, early diagnosis and management of diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases & common cancers e.g. cervix cancer, breast cancer & oral cancer Swasthya Rakshan Programme for

¹⁰ UNICEF https://www.unicef.org/adolescence/index_73653.html

¹¹ Manchanda RK. Integrating Homoeopathy in Health Care. Indian J Res Homoeopathy 2016;10:1-5

health promotion through health education to local population, for screening, identification of risk factors and early diagnosis of diseases, providing homoeopathic treatment; Homoeopathy for Healthy Child to sensitize target audiences including health workers, patients, and care givers about benefits of homoeopathy for common diseases and thereby promoting health through Homoeopathy for identified conditions like diarrhoea, respiratory illnesses, dental conditions, skin conditions, developmental delays, in children and behavioural problems, acute infections, substance abuse in adolescent children. National Campaign on Homoeopathy for Mother & Child Care for spreading awareness of the potential role of Homoeopathy in the management of Mother & Child Health among target group.

Strengths of Homoeopathy in Maternal and Child care¹²

- ❖ Highly beneficial for many diseases related to women and children
- ❖ Medicines can be safely administered for various ailments throughout pregnancy without any adverse reaction/side effects
- ❖ Can be used during childbirth to contain problems associated with labor and is effective for post-delivery and lactation complaints
- ❖ Effective for various diseases of children
- ❖ Compliance is good especially in children as the medicines are sweet and palatable
- ❖ Simple method of administration
- ❖ No drug resistance, no drug dependency and no known side effects
- ❖ Treatment is cost effective

¹²A comprehensive Report On National Campaign On Homoeopathy For Mother & Child Care,CCRH

To strengthen tribal adolescent girls nutrition in a holistic way it is important that the rural livelihood women self-help groups(SHGs) in programs like National Rural Livelihood Missions be sensitized and roped in planning and monitoring systems, as they themselves are in most case are clientele of maternal programmes.

The State may also consider the promotion of essential nutrition specific and sensitive interventions for young mothers - before and during pregnancy - (i) Improving food and its nutrient quality, (ii) prevent and manage micronutrient deficiencies and anaemia, (iii) Increase women's access to health services and special care for 'most at-nutritional risk women', (iv) increase women's access to water and sanitation education and commodities, and (v) prevent too early, too many and too close pregnancies.²²

The Centre programmes delivers iron and folic acid and de-worming tablets, weight gain monitoring, bed nets (malaria-prone areas) and counselling to pregnant women as part of antenatal care services on monthly outreach and facility-based antenatal contact points. However, uptake of these services has remained traditionally low. The role of the State needs to be more involved considering the multidimensional nature of nutrition requires convergence to (i) enhance uptake of health services (ii) ensure adoption of WASH(water, sanitation and hygiene) practices (iii) empowerment of women through livelihood and education (iv) making it a people's movement. A convergence mechanism needs to be developed with departments of Health, Women and Child, Water and Sanitation and Youth

²²UNICEF

Affairs so that there is coordination in providing services to adolescent tribal girls.

Conclusion

It is a fact that no single medical system can manage all the health care needs of society and every system of medicine has its own areas of strength and weakness. Tripura may recognise the need for a maternal homeopathy campaign. The initiative should aim at sensitizing policy makers, medical professionals of other systems and the common man about potential role of Homoeopathy in treating mother and child health problems. The campaign should also sensitize all stake holders, i.e. policy makers, program evaluators, opinion makers, homoeopathic, allopathic and other physicians and NGO's regarding the strengths of Homoeopathy in maternal and child care. A platform may also be created for exchange and orientation of knowledge among Homoeopathic, Allopathic and other Physicians concerning the scope of Homoeopathy in Mother and Child Care.

Special focus may be laid on the districts where the burden of malnourishment is high. The State may integrate adolescent nutrition activities with the Department of Health's Village Health and Sanitation Days by Inclusion of nutritioncounselling sessions to adolescent girls. There is need for Inter-departmental convergence by Government of Tripura for strengthening community efforts group counselling and management of maternal malnutrition at the field level. Young mothers and their families, and the community need to be made aware of the knowledge about pregnancy-related complications and their associated signs/symptoms through, intensive information, education and communication (IEC) activities.

Activities of Tribal Youth Organizations in Tripura from Late 1960's to 1980 with Special Reference to TUJS and TSF

Nayem Hussain

Historical Background

Tripura would be termed a 'Tribal State' in the early forties of nineteenth century because most of her inhabitants at that time were tribals. The Census Report of 1941 also revealed that the total population of this hill state of Tripura was 513010, majority of whom were tribals belonging to 19 tribes¹. The influx of refugees in Tripura in 1942 and 1946 following communal riots in some sub-divisions of Dacca and Tripura Districts of British India totally changed the demography of the State and the tribals were reduced to minority. The immigration which continued in a faster rate subsequently brought manifold problems for the tribesman of Tripura and the process of immigration was continued by the partition of India. The administration started giving settlement to the immigrants even on the grazing grounds of the tribals. Subsequently, grant of permanent land rights to the immigrants even deep into the interior and reserve forests² led to the reduction of Jhum-land which added to the difficulty of the tribals. Over and above that, tribals who had been in

¹*Tripura District Gazetteers*. P.143.

²Tripura on the March 6th January 1968, Publicity Department, Government of Tripura, P.33.

possession of land and were adapted to plough cultivation were also losing control on their land due to the tricky moves of the non-tribal moneylenders. As a result, numerous false cases began to be filed against the tribals in police stations at that time in order to harass them psychologically but there was no conviction at all.³ However, the process resulted in a large-scale alienation of tribal lands to Bengali peasants and a growing incidence of indebtedness among the tribes. As the non-tribal economy went on growing in the plains, the interaction between tribes and non-tribes led to an unequal exchange and economic exploitation. The marginalization and deprivation of the tribes in the economic field gradually led to a situation where the sanskritised tribes experienced the cultural arrogance of the majority. The problem of economic marginalization of the tribes due to indebtedness, poverty, alienation and eviction from land became a focal point of tribal mobilization during the 1960s and 1970s.⁴

In the decades of sixties and seventies the tribal villages had least contact with the rest of plain Tripura except with some traders for the purpose of trade transaction. In those days the entry of a doctor was strictly restricted by the tribal *Sardars* or tribal quacks called *Onzi* in local Kokborok language. They were practically the guardian not only of the traditional method of treatment but also of the economic affairs of tribal life. Superstitions were so widely practised in the tribal society that the modern system of medical treatment was quite unknown to the tribals. The poor tribals were compelled to sell out their land at a nominal price to the capable plainsmen. Alcohol and the

³Sen, Tripur Chandra, *Tripura in Transition*. Agartala, 1970, p-71.

⁴Sociological Bulletin, p.52 (2), September 2003..

indigenous liquor products weakened tribal males and as a result they were gradually losing everything including their health, properties and wealth. Thus, a spectacular social movement began to be launched in the sixties and seventies till the movement was turned political from the previous non-political character.

The Tripura Rajya Mukti Parishad which was formed in May, 1948 started a strong a strong resistance movement and the hill people stood firmly and united behind it to fight for the rights of the tribals. The Government took all the necessary measures to crush the resistance movements of the Tribals and police opened fire on some poor and starving tribal and non-tribal farmers of Golaghati area under Bishalgarh police station who assembled to persuade a local mahajan to sell his paddy to them at the market rate on October 9, 1948. As result of the firing 7 farmers (6 tribals) were killed and 8 others were injured.⁵ The Government opened military camps and police stations in the tribal areas for crushing the movement of the tribals which resulted in the killing of many innocent villagers and burning down of many houses. The Parishad and tribal people were then left with no other alternative but to resist the violence with violence. The gravest atrocity of the security force was the killing of three tribal women, namely, Madhumati, Kumari and Rupasree at Padmabil under Khowai Sub-Division in March, 1949. The three women were shot dead just for their refusal to carry the arms and ammunition and baggage of the military personnel.⁶ The news of this brutal murder reached every nook and corner of Tripura through the meetings

⁵ Deb, Dasarath, '*Mukti Parishader Itikatha*' (Bengali), Calcutta, 1987, P.77

⁶ Sen, Tripur Chandra, Op.cit. p.77.

and pamphlets of the Mukti Parishad. With a view to resist such atrocities in future a strong volunteer corps named 'Santi Bahini' was formed. The volunteers of the Bahini and the tribal youths in hills started countering the military personnel with their ancestral guns. In the last phase of the year 1949 a branch of the Communist Party of India was formed in Tripura and immediately after its formation the party joins hand with the Mukti Parishad in leading and strengthening the resistance movement. From then Communist and its tribal wing Mukti Parishad continued their fight for the cause of the Jhumias and other landless peasants and the poor tribals.

Crisis of identity of an ethnic community normally develops when it is relatively backward and outnumbered by an advance community. This was the situation of the tribals in Tripura. In the change socio-economic scenario the tribal people began to suffer maladjustment. They began to think that they were socially cornered, politically outnumbered and economically deprived. Their language, culture and way of life were at stake and even their tribal entity was endangered. Consequently, the above mentioned developments and feelings prompted the tribal people to quest for tribal autonomy in Tripura.

The tribal autonomy movement revolved around three principle demands, such as, land, languages and self-government which can be interpreted in terms of protection of tribal land, recognition of Kokborok as the second state language and installation of a Tribal Autonomous Councils in Tripura. Thus, these were the three points of thrust of the tribal autonomy movement.

The local tribal movement for autonomy in Tripura had two distinct ideological approaches. One section of the tribal people

preferred to go it alone. It was an approach to tribalism. On the other hand there was another section of the tribals who did not see eye to eye with them. They liked to fight for the tribal cause and at the same time, to rally around the democratic and progressive section of the non-tribal people. This approach had succeeded in mobilizing the tribals and non-tribals in large number in the struggle for realizing the just and legitimate demands of the tribals. The approach to tribalism had little effect and ultimately gave way to the cult of violence through the tribal extremist groups.

Ethno-centric Tribal Organisation in Tripura

With the rise of non-tribal population in Tripura, some ethno-centric tribal organisation came into being in post-Independence periods for protecting the tribal interest in Tripura. 'Bir Bikram Tripura Sangha' was formed by Durjoy Kishore Dev Varman and its main motto was to resist the influx of refugees into Tripura. It worked wholeheartedly to safeguard the tenancy right of the permanent inhabitants of Tripura. The Sangha had its militant wing styled in the local dialect as 'Seng- Krak' which means clenched fist. Kunjeswar Deb Barma, son of Jageswar Deb Barma was the leader of the wing which was known for its 'Bengal Kheda' movement. It carried out violent activities on many refugee colonies and terrorised them to leave these colonies. A section of Tripura Gana Mukti Parishad (C.P.I's tribal wing) was also moulded and it took part in violent activities. In 1949 when the last Dewan A. B. Chatterjee assumed the office of the Chief Commissioner of Tripura, the organisation was declared outlawed for its violent activities. After Seng-krak was declared as outlaw, some of its members took the initiative in the formation of 'Paharia Union' in July 1951. Chandra Sadhu Rupini who was

a prominent leader of Italam community was its leader. Another organisation namely 'Adibasi Samity' was formed in 1952 under the leadership of Sunitjivan Chakma and Madhab Master with the initiative to consolidate Chakma community. The urban and educated tribal people of Agartala came forward to organize new association, known as 'Adivasi Sangha' where Jiten Deb Barma, Bansi Thakur and Lalit Deb Barma were the leaders and the main objective of the Adivasi Sangha was to get dominance in administration and took anti-refugee stands.

In 1955 when State Reorganisation Commission recommended for merger of Tripura with Assam, a group of tribals of Tripura supported the recommendation with a motive to put 'Bengalee-hegemony' to an end. Further they were also toying with an idea of a separate 'Tripura State'. This tribal group under the leadership of Sneha Kumar Chakma established a branch of the 'Tribal Union' at Agartala in 1955 and they maintained a close rapport with other tribal leaders of north-east India. In 1956 it was renamed as 'Eastern India Tribal Union' which raised slogan for a 'Tribal State' comprising NEFA, Manipur, Khasi and Jaintia Hills, Garo Hills, Mizo Hills, Naga Hills, Tripura and tribal area of Assam.⁷

The Seng-Krak appeared for the second time in 1967 and this time it confined its activity mainly in Desda Kanchanpur areas of North Tripura and drew the support mainly from a section of the Reangs and the Chakmas. It launched movement with the blessing of the Mizo National Front. In November 1967 wall-posters appeared in Kanchanpur area in the name of Seng-Krak

⁷ Mohanta, Bijan. *Tripura in the light of socio-political movements since 1945*. Progressive Pub. Kolkata, 2004. p.60.

directing the Bengali-refugees to vacate Tripura.⁸ One Shri Ananta Reang formed this secret militant organisation with the slogan that the new settlers (the Bengalees) must quit Kanchanpur Valley by 25 November 1967.

Genesis and Activities of Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti

The defeat of CPI (M) in both the Parliamentary and Assembly elections in 1967 seemed to be a turning point in the history of the tribal political movement in Tripura. Yet, a vacuum was created in the tribal politics and there was no such tribal political organization to fight for the cause of the tribals. Over and above that, the formation of youth based political parties by the Nagas, Garos, and Khasis provided new aspirations to the tribal younger generation in Tripura to form their own political party. In a meeting held at Kainta Kobra Para, an unknown village in north side of Agartala on 10-11 July, 1967, all walk of tribal people, namely, employees, graduates, political leaders, social workers, students and youths intensively deliberated upon tribal problems and subsequently formed a political party called Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti (TUJS). Ravicharan Debbarma became the first President of the party, Ramesh Debbarma became the first Vice President, Whereas, Draukumar Reang and Renulal Debbarma became the first General Secretary and Joint Secretary respectively.⁹ Besides the above mentioned office bearers, Bijoy Kumar Hrangkhawl was one of the prominent leaders of the TUJS. The party leaders began to spread the aims, aspirations, demands and desires of the party to all the tribal communities of

⁸Chaube, S. K., *Hill Politics in North East India*, 1973, Calcutta, p.193.

⁹Debbarma, Nisikanta *'Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti O Tar Uttor Parbo'*, Agartala, p.17.

Tripura and it then became a powerful platform of the young generation of the tribals of Tripura. The aims and aspirations of the TUJS may be set forth as follow :

- i. Unification of cognate tribes.
- ii. Raising them to the level of a self-governing nationality.
- iii. Promotion of a tribal body for mobilising public opinion.
- iv. Involvement of the tribal masses in public movements.
- v. Restoration of lands transferred from tribals to non-tribals.
- vi. Recognition of tribal dialect as a medium of instruction.
- vii. Use of the Roman script for tribal dialects.
- viii. Reservation of more seats in public service and appointments.
- ix. Proper settlement of the shifting cultivators.
- x. Continuation of the protective privileges.
- xi. Rapid spread of literacy among the tribal.
- xii. Economic betterment.
- xiii. Closer relation among the tribals of Northeast India.
- xiv. Formation of District Council in accordance with the Sixth Schedule and
- xv. Promotion of friendly relation of tribal and non-tribals.

The Tripura Ujajati Juba Samiti (TUJS) organised a big tribal rally at Agartala on 22 June, 1967 and in course of time it has emerged as a powerful political platform of the tribal youths of Tripura. In the initial stage it demanded for introduction of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution in Tribal areas of Tripura and Aghore Debbaarma was one of the active supporters of the demand. However, after special conference of the TUJS at Durga Choudhury Para of Agartala on 21-23 January 1969, the demand was changed to Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India.²⁰

²⁰Ibid. p. 18.

Immediately after formation of the TUJS, the Communist leaders of Tripura wanted that it should function as a tribal wing of CPI (M) but the leaders of TUJS did not accept the proposal. After publicizing that the TUJS would pursue for demand of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India in Tribal Areas of Tripura in newspapers, the CPI (M) became angry and therefore withdraw its four members from the Executive Committee of the Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti(TUJS). Since then rivalry started between CPI (M) and TUJS. The representatives of CPI (M) who were withdrawn from the TJS were Lein Prasad Reang, Gangamanik Devbarman and Ramani Devbarman. Consequently, the CPI (M) formed a parallel organisation in the name of Nikhil Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti.¹¹

The Congress Government policies resulted into loss of land and home by the tribal people and their demand for special safeguard was not only out rightly rejected but was also stiffly opposed. The Land Revenue and Land Reforms Act of 1960 had of course stipulated prohibitions and transfer of tribal owned land to non-tribal, but the said prohibitions were not implemented effectively. In fact illegal transfer of tribal lands continued recklessly. The area once densely populated by the tribals, were fragmented in the name of rehabilitation of Bengalee refugees in the most calculated manner. The ruling party found that mere repressions would not be adequate enough to crush the Communist based TUJS among the tribal people. Hence, it backed up and supported the 'Tripur Sanga' and the Eastern India Tribal Union to create wedges within the tribal community, but

¹¹ Choudhury, J. Gana, '*A political History of Tripura*', New Delhi, Inter-India Publication, p. 60.

failed miserably to make any noticeable dent whatsoever. Thus when a section of young literate generations of the tribals who had no experience of the both violent and peaceful historic struggle came out to champion the cause of the tribal community to challenge the communists' line of communal harmony and united struggle for the good of the under privileged of both the ethnic groups,¹¹ the Congress must have seen in it as a fulfillment of its dream of division in tribal loyalties. The congress party calculated that with the birth of Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti(TUJS), the communist would soon be in political troubles. It was a fact that communist was present at the time of the ceremonial birth of Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti.However this presence must have been aimed at taking the wind out of the Congress's sails which were engaged in fishing in troubled waters, so far as the tribal sector was concerned. Thus, the Congress had every reason to gain the richest harvest through the creation of TUJS.¹² Since 1967 the Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti (TUJS) had been carrying on movements in the tribals cause. On July 11, 1968 some 324 tribals observed a hunger strike and the TUJS again observed a 24- hour hunger strike in different part of Tripura on March 11, 1970¹³ with demands on restoration of tribal lands transferred to the non-tribals since 1960, formation of Tribal Autonomous District Council, reservation of government job and recognition of Kokborok language as official language and medium of instruction and adoption of Roman script for Kokborok.

¹¹Basu, Pradip Kumar, *The Communist Movement in Tripura*, Calcutta, Progressive Publishers, p.129.

¹²Printed leaflet: Upajati der astiwa rakshar dabite Tripura Upajati juba samiti'r andolan karmasuchi, (Benga.i, 7 January 1974, TUJS, Agartala.

During the Parliamentary election of 1971, the Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti (TUJS) transformed itself into a political platform and it decided to fight in election in the Joynagar (Agartala) Conference of the TUJS. In such way, Drau Kumar Reang was selected to contest from West Tripura Parliamentary seat and Bijay Kumar Hrankhawl was selected to contest from Tripura East Parliamentary. After that, Sukhamay Sengupta, Chief Minister of Tripura initiated a draconian ordinance to put the Tribal Reserve Act to an end. The Tribal Reserve Act was introduced by Late King Bir Bikram Manikya, where 1950 square kilometre area were reserved for five tribal communities such as Tipra, Noatia, Jamatia, Reang and Halam, where no other communities were allowed to sell, purchase or capture, but the government forcibly converted into Khas land. The lapse of the Tribal Reserve Act really angered Kokborok linguistic speaking people who were the majority tribal community in Tripura. The TUJS seized this opportunity and started a tribal movement which was also supported by the CPI (M). On 8th February 1974, the TUJS and the Gana Mukti Parishad together called a convention in community hall which was attended by over 300 representatives from all over the state and a 'Juba Sangram' committee was formed with Abhiram Debbarma and Shyamacharan Tripura as convenors. By the call of Juba Sangram, mass agitation was held all over the state on 30 April 1974. The internal ideological conflict between CPI (M) and the TUJS automatically pushed out the Gana Mukti Parishad (GMP) out of the movement. Subsequently, a historic rally was organised by the Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti (TUJS) at Agartala without participation of the GMP on 10th July 1974. The TUJS convened a meeting on 26th January 1975 and it gave final warning to the Chief Minister to be ready for any

consequences if reform was not introduced in the Schedule Area of Tripura. Thus, the Tripura Government amended Land Reform Act for Schedule Areas on 27 February, 1975. The TUJS movement for demand of the Sixth Schedule provision of the Constitution of India became stronger after the formation of the Left-front government in 1978. In 1983 just before the legislative assembly election of the state, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi made a deal with the TUJS to facilitate them with the Sixth Schedule provision if the TUJS support the Congress in election.¹⁵

Origin and Activities of Twipra Students Federation (TSF)

Due to influx of refugees from Bangladesh (erstwhile East Pakistan) or migration, the original inhabitants, that is, the tribals of the state were gradually outnumbered. The immigrant Bengalis increasingly played vital role in the economic and political life of the state. So the tribals became apprehensive about the immigrant Bengalis and became conscious about their own identity. This protest movement of the tribals is delicately linked with the political development of the state. This change in demographic structure also brought about a change in the political atmosphere of the State. The State's electorate became increasingly divided on ethnic lines. The CPI remained deeply entrenched in tribal areas, whereas the Congress created its support base among the immigrant Bengalis. The split in the Communist Party occurred in 1964. This helped Congress in bringing some of the tribals into its fold. But the fasted growing demographic imbalance between two communities created a perceived fear of identity loss among the educated tribal youth of the state. Decision making, economy,

¹⁵Debbarma, Nisikanta. Op. cit. p.27.

educational institutions and political leadership of the state are all dominated by the ethno-linguistic Bengali majority population. As a result, all spheres of tribal life were affected, particularly their language, belief system, tribal land system, food, dress and their traditional way of life. The Land Reforms Act of 1960 allowed de-reservation of tribal land, forceful introduction of Kokborok in Bengali scripts, imposition of Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act 1958 (hereafter AFSPA) etc. played key roles in the formation of tribal student movement in the state. These factors led to the creation of much 'discontent' in the minds of the tribal youth.

To protect themselves from all these threatening forces, the educated tribal elite of the state formed Tribal Student's Federation (TSF) on 25 October 1968 as a platform for Nationalist Students' Federation of Tripura, especially among the indigenous people of Tripura. It is totally independent indigenous student organization and it was renamed as the Twipra Student Federation (TSF) in 1996 by emphasizing on 'Tripuri' tribal nationalism. One of veteran leader of TSF movement pointed out that the motive behind the launch tribal student movement is 'to speak the truth to power' which means to highlight the grievances and untold sufferings of the tribal people to the the authority who wielded power.¹⁵

The role of the TSF towards its social issues are reflected in many of its action oriented activities, such as, the move to change the organization's name from 'tribal' to 'twipra' clearly indicates

¹⁵ Interview with Ngendra Jamatia (ex-General Secretary of TSF, Agartala, 15, January 2016.

a sudden spur in the indigenous ethnic sentiment as well as language protectionism and also tribalism to protect the tribal identity. The student leaders feel that their name 'tripuri' or 'tippera' is a mistaken appellation for the Kokborok speaking people of Tripura. They assert that according to Kokborok etymology their name originated from two words- tu (water) and pra (near), meaning people of river valleys. Thus, they claim their name to be 'twipra'.

After the merger of Tripura with the Indian Union in 1949, most tribes of Tripura, especially those converted to Hinduism remained out of touch with their original social formations based on tribal ideas, images, symbols, rituals, beliefs, customs, myths and legends, which were all related to their simple non-surplus generating subsistence mode of production much due to powerful influence of majority Bengali culture.¹³ Over and above that, such degeneration of the Tripuri tribes could also be attributed to the influence of modernization. For example, young tribal girls started wearing 'sari' that Bengali women wear in place of their 'rignaiborok' or 'pachra' which is their traditional code and symbol of dress. In this regard a 'ISF slogan became popular- 'rignaiborok ma kana' (all have to wear rignaiborok).¹⁴ Likewise, the 'ISF movement against the derogatory remarks on them as 'pahari', 'mama' hurled by the majority Bengali, exclusion of the 'Laskar Community' from Tribal status and 'withcraft practice' brought much change in tribal societies in the State.

¹³Ray, Syamal Kumar, *India's North-East and Travails of Tripura*, Minerva Associates, Kolkata, 2003, pp.-47-48.

¹⁴Interview with Ngendra Jamatia (ex-General Secretary of ISF, Agartala, 15, January 2016.

TSF movement for education rapidly progress the education status of the tribals and also increased their political consciousness. Perennial dissatisfaction with the increasing number of non-tribal population in Tripura led the TSF to launch movement to restore the alienated land by the Bengali population. The Government of Tripura is said to have rehabilitated an estimated 300,000 refugees from the erstwhile East Pakistan in various tribal areas against their will.¹⁸ After that the State has been affected by constant flow of illegal migrants from Bangladesh. Most of these migrants illegally settled in tribal areas. Meanwhile a communal riot between the tribal people and the Bengalis took place in 1981. A permanent mistrust between them prevailed since then. Ethno-student politics loomed large in the State to that effect. Although the TSF is said to be an independent organisation, it played an important role in political mobilization for the ideologically like- minded tribal political parties such as the TUJS from time to time as the current General Secretary of the organization once stated that “the TSF is not a branch or organisation of any political party but we welcome all political parties who share and support our ideology and demands.”¹⁹ Until 1997 the TSF had a close conglomeration with the TUJS in fighting the Assembly elections. In the 1972 Assembly elections, the TUJS contested from 11 constituencies with the support of the TSF but could not secure a single seat. In the next Assembly election in 1977, the TUJS contested from 28 constituencies where

¹⁸ Bhattacharya, Gayatri, *Refugee Rehabilitation and its Impact on Tripura's Economy*, Guwahati, Omsons Publications, 1988, pp. 5-10.

¹⁹Pratibadi Kalam, *Twipralander Birodhitay TSF*, Agartala, 1st November, 2015, p.1.

they won 4 seats and it placed TUJS for the first time in history as an opposition party in Tripura Legislative Assembly. This shows that the TSE played a crucial role as a change agent in the power politics of Tripura.

The demand for the formation of TTAADC under the provision of the Sixth Schedule to the Indian Constitution has emerged from the fact that the Congress Government in the State dissolved the status of 'Tribal Reserve Areas' covering 110 sq. miles in 1974 and the status was enjoyed by the five tribal groups of the State- Tripuri, Noatia, Jamatia, Reang and Halam. The 'Tribal Reserve Areas' were created by Maharaja Bir Bikram in 1931 and also in 1943 to relieve the increasing land crisis among the tribal people in the kingdom. To resist the government decision, an All Party Tribal Convention was held on 7th April, 1974 in the presence of Tripura Rajya Upajati Gana Mukti Parishad of the CPI(M), Tripura Rajya Mukti Parishad of the CPI, the TUJS, the TSE, the Tribal Youth Federation and Tripura Upajati Karmachari Samity. The All Party Tribal Convention raised a four points charter of demands which are-

- i. Revocation of the Ordinance and preservation of the tribal compact area and introduction of an Autonomous District Council therein.
- ii. Restoration of tribal lands transferred to the non-tribals after 1960.
- iii. Recognition of 'Kokborok' as the second state language.
- iv. Introduction of Kokborok as the medium of instruction at the primary state.²¹

²¹Debbarma, Ranjit, *Socio-Political Movements in Tripura: with special reference to Dasarath Deb*, Guwahati. EBH Publishers, 2016, p- 91.

A Joint Action Committee was also formed and it organised a mass demonstration on 30th April 1974 before the Block Development Officer in the State. A twelve hour 'Tripura Band' was observed on 3rd May 1974 but the united tribal movement could not go for long because of ideological differences among the different parties. The Gumati Dam which was built in 1967 flooded a valley area of 46.34 sq. km in southern part of Tripura. As per official records some 2558 tribal families were uprooted from their traditional habitat without proper rehabilitation.²¹ The TSF protested for their proper compensation but till today there has not been any action from the government.

Conclusion

By 1971 the Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti also floated a force of armed volunteers under the leadership of Bijoy Hrangkhawl under the banner of 'Tripur Sena.' It is worth mentioning here that the rapid growth of the TUJS and its brand of virulent ethnic politics were successful in exerting tremendous pressure upon the State Government and the CPI (M), who ruled the state. However the TUJS's militant agitation for District Council evoked adverse reaction from the non-tribal Bengalis who perceived a threat to their land holdings and other rights. Thereafter, the 'Amra Bangali', a political arm of the 'Ananda Marg', launched a counter campaign to stall the formation of Autonomous District Council. The campaign and counter-campaign led to ethnic violence in Tripura in 1980 which spreaded in the entire state. The conflict resulted in what is popularly known as the Mandai Massacre of June 1980 wherein nearly 350 settlers were killed

²¹Interview with Ngendra Jamatia (ex-General Secretary of TSF, Agartala, 15, January 2016.

and over 1000 peoples lost their lives in the ensuing riots after the massacre. In order to address the concerns of Tripura's tribal communities, the Tripura Legislative Assembly resolved to set up an Autonomous District Council in 1979 to represent the interest of all the tribal community of Tripura. Subsequently the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council Act established the Autonomous District Councils in January 1982, and a in 1985 the constitutional amendment brought the TTAADC under the ambit of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India.

Marginalization or alienation of the tribal people has given rise to tribal student's movement under the umbrella of TSE. A sense of ethno-nationalism developed in the minds of the tribal youth owing to the perceived fear of identity loss. The movement caused socio-political transformation in Tripura from within. It can be rightly said that it played as a 'catalyst guardian role' in the tribal milieu as it stood for protecting their culture, tradition, ritual and historical monuments etc. For deportation of Illegal migrants, the TSE often refers the legal way to solve the problem that is come with 'Indira-Mujib' Pact of 1971. The agreement emphasized that those Bangladeshi nationals who entered into India after 25th March 1971 would not be treated as Citizen of India.²² But there has not been any solution to solve this problem till date. After 1980 the TSE built a base in politics among the tribals and continued their movements with demands on introduction of the Kokborok in Roman script, repealing the draconian law of ADSPA, introduction of Inner Line Permit and it also created a linkage with North East Students Organization (NESO) and tried to reinforce its movement in broader perspective.

²²De. Sibopada, *Illegal Migrations and the North East*, Anamika Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 2005, pp. 25-26.

Issues and Challenges of the Tribal Youths in Tripura Vis-a-Vis the Perspective and Provision of the Constitution of India

Prof. Jangkhogam Doungel

Introduction

The term 'Youth' has been defined by Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary as the time of life when a person is young especially the time before a child becomes an adult. Youth also refers to young people who are energetic and who are in the prime of their life. Youth is an important concept as a stage of human life span. The age of youth has been classified differently by different governmental agencies and organisations but the focus of the classification centred on the young age group. The United Nations classifies young people in the age group of 14 to 24 years as youths, whereas, the National Youth Policy of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India categorises young people in the age group of 14 to 29 years as youths. The age of youth has been classify differently in different countries, such as, 18-35 years in Bangladesh, 15-40 years in Malaysia, 15-29 years in Pakistan, 15-25 years in Brunei, 16-35 years in Maldives, 15-29 years in Singapore and 15-29 years in Sri Lanka.¹ It should be noted from the different classifications and definitions that the age group of youths approximately range from 14 to 30 years. Former Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi once said that "Youths are pillars of the nation" and as stability of any building depends heavily upon the firmness of its pillars, the foundation of any nation also depends heavily upon the capacity and constructive

contribution Youths constitute 27.5 percent of India's population as per the 2011 census record and the youths constitute 563 million in the period of the twelfth five year plan. Since India is a multicultural and geographically diverse country like USA, youth faces many problems to join the mainstream development such as caste discrimination, social strata diversification, economic incompatibility, regional feeling, educational disparity, religious and regional differences and sometimes colour differentiation.² Tribal youths in Tripura have potential and capacity for improvement but they are handicapped by certain environmental factors, namely, demographic problem where tribal population become minority in their ancestral land, lack of qualitative schools, imposition of Bengali medium in schools, lack of infrastructure and economic problem. Many tribal youths of Tripura cannot even utilise constitutional provision effectively due to lack of education and low status in socio-economic development. The paper attempts to analyse the condition and status of tribals of Tripura since pre-colonial era, changing status of tribals of Tripura, the constitutional provision for tribals of Tripura and the impact upon the tribal youths of Tripura. The paper will broadly deal with issues and challenges of tribal youths of Tripura by tracing from the political history.

Historical background of tribal Areas of North East India

The hill tribes of North East India remained unexposed to other cultures of the country until the advent of the British rule. Tribal Areas of North East India were independent and autonomy in their own way in pre-colonial era. The tribes had their own chiefs and they governed themselves by following their traditional custom, culture and ethic. Tribals who were never part of Bengal and Assam were demarcated inside the province of Bengal and

Assam by the colonial rulers. The British authority knew that tribals in Eastern Bengal and Assam were different from people of the plains because they had their own civilization and traditional administration. They were neither under the influence of the Hindu nor Muslim. Different tribal groups had their own chiefs but tribals of Tripura had kings. The British authority observed the traditional tribal administration, culture, custom and social behaviour and they were conscious of the uniqueness of the tribals from people of the plains. The British authority also began to know the hatred and enmity between people of the plains and hills.

The British authority was so careful in dealing with the tribals that it adopted different rules and regulations towards them. The Brahmaputra Valley was annexed to British India in 1826 but part of Garo Hills was annexed to Rangpur District of Bengal which was administered with special rules and regulations. Regulation X of 1822 was the first such special regulations and it was enacted on the basis of the report of David Scot. David Scot was the Magistrate at Rangpur which was the north-eastern district of Bengal. As recommended by David Scot in his enquiry report to the Governor-General, the hill areas inhabited by the Garo people were separated from the old Rangpur District and were joined to Dhubri, Goalpara and Karaibari Thanas to form a new district called North-East Rangpur. So, this new district was administered in accordance with the provisions of the Regulation X of 1822. As a matter of fact, tribals areas which were annexed in British India were regulated by the Regulation X of 1822 before the enactment of other regulations. Tribal areas were annexed to British India one after another, such as, Khasi and Jantia Hills in 1838, the Naga Hills in 1866, the North Cachar Hills in 1854,

etc?The British Administration too followed the policy of isolation of the tribes, inhabiting the North East India from the plains by enacting the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873 known as the Inner Line Permit system. The Inner Line Permit system had been adopted for maintenance of status quo in the tribal social set-up as well as to protect them (tribals) from exploitation and assimilation of the plain people. As a matter of fact, the British administration did not interfere at all in the social and other internal affairs of the tribes. The main concern of the British Administration was the maintenance of law and order but they were left to themselves in managing their internal affairs. The non-interference of the British Administration in the internal affairs of the tribals and legalization of the traditional tribal chiefs with internal autonomy had created the feeling among the tribals that they were independent and autonomous as before. The reason being, the chiefs looked after the people and administered the village administration like before in the eyes of the common people. Thus, the British Administration had made the chiefs very powerful before the people but the chiefs were only used as revenue collectors in the strict sense of the term. Whatever be the case, keeping the tribals aloof from exploitation and assimilation of the plain people as well as vesting of internal autonomy upon the chiefs, enabled the continuance of tribal social life without disturbance from outside.

Some of the rules and regulations which had been enacted for governance of the tribals were Regulation X of 1822, Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873; Scheduled District Act of 1874, Chin Hills Regulation of 1896, Government of India Act of 1919 and Government of India Act of 1935. Thus the tribal inhabited areas were known as Scheduled Districts by the Scheduled

District Act of 1874, "Backward Tract" by the Government of India Act of 1919 and the terminology "Backward Tract" was changed into Excluded Area and Partially Excluded Area by the Government of India Act of 1935. Excluded Area means backward most tribal areas which were under the direct rule of the Governors and districts which were categorized as Excluded Area had no representation in the provincial legislature. In fact, Excluded Areas were totally excluded from reform and normal administration where administration was carried by the concerned administrative heads of the districts who were known by different designations, namely, Political Officer, Superintendent and Deputy Commissioner. Whereas, districts which were categorized as Partially Excluded Area were under Provincial Government and they also had representatives in the provincial legislature. However, the law enacted by provincial legislature could not be enforced in the Partially Excluded Area without the approval of the Governor. Moreover, the Governor could still use his discretionary power without consulting the Provincial Government in the Partially Excluded Area. It could also be stated that Partially Excluded were partially excluded from reform and normal administration, and Provincial Government had limited jurisdiction in Partially Excluded Areas under the supervision of the Governor of the province. As a result, the hill districts in Assam were classified as Excluded Areas and Partially Excluded Areas.

A great fear psychosis was created in the mind of tribals of Assam on the eve of India's independence. The tribals thought that they might be subjected to exploitation and assimilation by the plain people with the exit of Britishers from India. They were also fearful of losing their land, autonomy, ethnic identity,

language, traditional tribal practices, custom and culture. Accordingly, the British Administration was also quite concerned about the future of tribals of Excluded and Partially Excluded areas. As a matter of fact, the Cabinet Mission, sent by the British Parliament under Sir Stafford Cripps had made a public statement on 16 March, 1946 and had suggested for the formation of an Advisory Committee, to study upon the rights of minorities and tribals of excluded area. Subsequently, an Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights, minorities and Tribal and Excluded Area was set up with Vallabhai Patel as the Chairman on 24th January, 1947 by the Constituent Assembly of India. The main task of the committee was to work out a modus operandi in the constitutional arrangement for tribals of excluded and partially excluded area and to enable them to safeguard their ethnic identity and culture in a democratic way. Subsequently, on 2nd February, 1947 the Advisory Committee set up three sub-committees which are listed as given below.⁴

1. North East Frontier (Assam) Tribal and Excluded Area Committee.
2. North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan Tribal and Excluded Area Committee.
3. Excluded and partially Excluded Areas in provinces other than Assam.

Gopinath Bordoloi was Chairman of the North East Frontier (Assam) Tribal and Excluded Area Committee and other members of the committee were Rev. J.M. Nichols Roy, Rup Nath Brahma, A.V. Thakkar and Mayang Nokcha. Mayang Nokcha replaced Aliba Inti, the previous member who was from Naga Hills. The Committee was also popularly known as Bordoloi Committee

after the name of its chairman and the then Chief Minister of Assam, Gopinath Bordoloi. A.V. Thakkar was Chairman of the Excluded and Partially Excluded Area (other than Assam) Sub-Committee. The draft schedule was submitted to the President of the Constituent Assembly on 21st February, 1948 and the matter was discussed in the Constituent Assembly on 5, 6 and 7 September 1949. After three days long heated debate in the Constituent Assembly and after certain amendments were made, the Sixth Schedule finally emerged⁵ and was incorporated in Articles 244 (2) and 275 (1) of the constitution of India. Article 244 (2) in the original constitution stated about the application of the Sixth Schedule in Tribal areas of the state of Assam but now Article 244 (2) states about the application of the Sixth Schedule in Tribal areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram; whereas, 275 (1) states about the funding pattern of the Autonomous District Councils under the Sixth Schedule provision. As a result, tribal inhabited areas under Fifth Schedule are known as "Scheduled Area" and tribal inhabited areas under the Sixth Schedule are known as "Tribal Area".⁶ It is clearly incorporated in the constitution of India that even if an area is exclusively tribal dominated area, it cannot be called a Tribal Area if Sixth Schedule provision to the constitution of India is not enforced in that area. Thus, the historical background of tribals of North East India including tribals of Tripura is unique and different. These unique characteristics of the tribals should be understood by one and all.

Changing political status of Tripura and its impact upon the tribal youths

The kingdom of Tripura was believed to have existed before the Vyasa's time probably around 600 BC. The history of the Pre-

Manikya Kings of Tripura was recognised as the Kshatriya of the royal warriors and belongs to the lunar race because they were either on the side of Duryodhana or of Yudisthira. Yajati of Mahabharata exiled his son Kirat (the hunter) and founded the city of Tribeg on the bank of Brahmaputra and the city got its name after his son Triper as Tripura. Tripur then extended his kingdom across Assam along the upper course of the river and shifted his capital from Tribeg on the Brahmaputra to Rangmati which was renamed as Udaipur by Uday Manikya in 1566-1571 and shifted to Agartala.⁷ The title of Manik was received by Ratnafah who was the hundred and first Raja from the King of Gaur and all the succeeding Rajas began to be known by the said title. Tripura remained as sovereign powerful kingdom for many years but trouble began for Tripura as a result of its collusion with the Mughls of Arracan and Portuguesemercenaries in 1587. After that, the Mohammedan appeared under Futteh Jung, by order of Emperor Jahangir, who wanted horses and elephants for his courts and camps. Thus, Tripura was under the influence of the Mohammedan between 1618-1761 and Tripura was plundered and looted financially by the Mohammedan during the period. The name of Tripura was also changed to Roushanabad by the Mohammedan. Bijai Manik, one of the puppet king of Tripura was given only monthly salary of Rs. 12,000 and the whole remaining revenue was sent to Dacca. *

The East India Company annexed the Chittagong Hill Tracts from the Nawab of Bengal in 1760 and began to contact Tripura in 1761 which was the first contact of the British with Tripura. 200 sepoy's under Lieutenant Mathews was despatched to Tipperah (Tripura) by Verelst, the chief administrator at Islamabad (Chittagong) under the order of Governor Vansittart

in 1761. The remnants and economic exploitation of Tripura by the Mohammedan was really devastating. The revenue fertile area of Tripura was mainly in the plains which the Mohammedan called it Pergunnah Roushanabad. Whereas, the hills which was described as independent Tipperah was not productive from revenue point of view. The Raja of Tripura was independent ruler of the hills but he was just like a Zamindar in the plains. From 1804 to 1810 the affairs of Hill Tipperah were the subject of constant debate in the Council Chamber of Government and in the Courts of Law. There was dispute between the Raja of Cachar and the Raja of Tipperah with regard to possession of parts of Hylakandi. In 1871, a separate Political Agent was appointed for Hill Tipperah to reside at Agartalla on the suggestion of Bengal Government. However, the appointment was cancelled in 1878 as the official responsibilities of the Political Agent were entrusted to Magistrate of Tipperah.⁹

British rule in Tripura was described into two phases, namely, from 1761 to 1865 and from 1866 onwards. The British authority in Tripura was basically successor of the Mughal. The Tripura Raja had two identities at that time, such as, a subject and Zamindar to the British Government in the Plains and independent Raja in the Hills. From 1862-1947, the Maharajas from Bir Chandra Manikya to Bir Bikram had fought continuously and had protested to preserve their rights, dignity, honour and territorial integrity, however, they were loyal to the British Government with some humiliations in their official engagement. The noble king Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya died on May 17, 1947 two months ahead of the partition of India. He however expressed his will to royal officials that his kingdom would join India rather than Pakistan. After the sudden death

of the king, the council of regency was headed by Maharani Kanchanprava Devi as President since the rightful king Bikram Kishore Manikya was too young to rule. The regent signed the accession of Tripura to the Indian Union on August 13, 1947 and October 15, 1949. Thus, the Princely State of Tripura was integrated to the Indian Union as Part-C State which was administered by the Chief Commissioner under the control of the Government of India. Maharaja Kirit Bikram Kishore Manikya later joined politics and became a Congress M.P. from Tripura twice in 1967 and 1977. His wife Maharani Bibhu Kumar Devi was also elected to the State Assembly in 1983 and 1988 and was also Revenue Minister in Congress-TUJS coalition government between 1988 and 1993.¹⁰

Maharaja Kirit Bikram Kishore Manikya had announced that 2170 sq. Km area of land in Khowai Sub-Division was reserved for the tribals. In this regard, the Government of India appointed a commission under U.N. Dhebar, former AICC President to look into the problems of the tribals and to find political solution. Mr N.M. Patnayak, the Chief Commissioner of Tripura asked the Dhebar Commission to declare certain tribal areas as scheduled areas. He also stated that influx of migrants from East Pakistan created problem for the tribals on their land and in their economy. Patnayak also demanded that the land ownership rights of the tribal should be safeguarded at all cost. It should be recollected that many tribals were not in favour of merger with the Indian Union because they wanted to remain independent without outside involvement. Till 1970, the system of Chief Commissionership as the head of administration prevailed in Tripura and it was beneficial for the tribals because the Chief Commissioner safeguarded the traditional rights of

the tribals. By the end of 1970, statehood demand started and the post of Chief Commissioner was upgraded to Lieutenant Governor. In the same year, a huge number of migrants came from Bangladesh and settled down in Tripura. The influx of migrants totally changed the demographic profile of Tripura and abruptly reduces the tribal population. In 1941, the tribal population was 59.9 percent and it came down to 36.85 percent in 1951. After the introduction of parliamentary system of government in the state, people demanded for more democratic rights and original inhabitants of Tripura, that is, the tribals become minority in their own ancestral land. In 1967, the Tripura Upajati Juba Samity (TUJS) was formed to tackle the problems of the tribals. The main objectives of the TUJS were to fulfil the basic need and necessities of the tribals by forming separate state within the state to enable the tribals to protect their nationality and culture. After that, Tripura National Volunteers (TNV) was formed in 1978 by a group of tribal people to demand for complete independence through armed struggle. Tribal youths of Tripura find it hard to digest the drastic change in political status of the state where native people become minority in their own ancestral land. As a matter of fact, normalcy could not return permanently even after the signing of accord between the TNV and government. Thus, the emergence of new militant outfit, namely, the All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) and the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) in mid 1990s signify the dissatisfied nature of the tribal youths of Tripura. The central theme of the ATTF and NLFT is centred on the protection and promotion of the interests of indigenous people, granting them the right to self-determination and more political autonomy and to repatriate the immigrants.¹¹

Constitutional provision for the tribals of Tripura

Tribal people in Tripura and Hill Areas of Manipur were not directly governed by some regulations of the British Government in India, namely, Regulation X of 1822, Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873; Scheduled District Act of 1874, Chin Hills Regulation of 1896, Government of India Act of 1919 and Government of India Act of 1935 but they were governed by the spirits of the above mentioned regulations. The Constitution of India has incorporated certain provisions for advancement and upliftment of the tribal and downtrodden people. Therefore, some of the constitutional provisions which are incorporated for tribals in general and tribals of Tripura in particular shall be analysed as given below.

4.1. Fundamental Rights

There are six fundamental rights and two of which deal with cultural and educational rights.³²

4.1.1. Article 29- Protection of interest of minorities

Article 29(1) Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.

Article 29(2) No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them.

4.1.2. Article 30- Right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions

Article 30(1) - All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

Article 30(2) - The State shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language.

The word 'minority' has not been defined properly in the constitution but it includes those non-dominant groups in a population which possess and wish to preserve stable ethnic, religious or linguistic tradition. Minority in the Constitution of India also mainly refers to Linguistic and religious minority. Therefore, like other minority and tribal groups in other parts of India, tribals of Tripura can also found protection under Article 29 and Article 30 of the Constitution of India.

4.2. Sixth Schedule

The provision of the Sixth Schedule has been incorporated for tribals in the then Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas of the Government of India Act of 1935 and it was enforced in Hill Areas of undivided Assam in the initial stage. As a matter of fact, tribals in Hill Areas of Manipur and Tripura were excluded from the original Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India. However, they are also entitled to enjoy the same constitutional privileges and entitlements which have been accorded to their other fellow tribals in other North Eastern region of India. As a matter of fact, tribals in Hill Areas of Manipur and Tripura also pressurised the Government of India and the respective State Government to grant them their constitutional rights. Tribals in Hill Areas of Manipur were accorded Autonomous District Council without autonomy outside the provision of the Sixth Schedule and Sixth Schedule is not yet accorded to them. In this regard, tribals of Tripura are in better constitutional provision now.

As a result of the subsequent demands by the tribals of Tripura, the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (1979) bill was unanimously passed by the Tripura Legislative Assembly on March 23, 1979 and Parliament also passed in the same year. As such, the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTADC) was initially set up under the provision of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India in January, 1982. However, as TTADC was not under the Sixth Schedule provision, autonomy and constitutional rights were not accorded. Therefore, tribals continued their demand for the Sixth Schedule and intensified their pressures upon the government. Consequently, a bill for extension of the Sixth Schedule in TTADC was passed by Parliament on August 23, 1984 and the provision of the Sixth Schedule was extended to the TTADC with effect from 1st April, 1985. The TTADC areas cover 68.10 percent of the total geographical areas of the state and the aims for creation of the TTADC under the provision of the Sixth Schedule comprise of introduction of internal autonomy and for protection of the social, economic and cultural interest of the native tribal population of the state. The TTADC is also expected to safeguard the tribal land and it is also expected to usher socio-economic development works for tribal population of the state.¹³ The TTADC is now listed in Part IIA in Paragraph 20 of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India and it also now protected under Article 244(2) and Article 275 (1) of the Constitution of India. The TTADC is now facilitated with law making powers in Paragraphs 3, 6 and 8 of the Sixth Schedule. It can also enjoy judicial powers as incorporated in Paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Sixth Schedule and financial powers through the State Government from consolidated fund of India as per Article 275 (1) of the

Constitution of India. Further, the TTADC can also have some say with regard to extraction of mineral resources within the geographical jurisdiction of the TTADC geographical areas as incorporated in Paragraph 9 of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India.¹⁴

It should also be pondered whether the TTADC is effectively facilitated with all the constitutional status and whether it practically exercises the constitutional responsibilities accorded to it or not? It should be noted that land revenue is the constitutional responsibility of the Autonomous District Council (ADC) in its administered area as incorporated in Paragraph 3(1) (a) and Paragraph 8 of the Sixth Schedule. Therefore, if the TTADC does not have complete control and jurisdiction of land revenue in the TTADC area, it amounts to violation of the provision of Paragraph 3 (1) (a) and Paragraph 8 of the provision of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India. It should also be pondered whether District Council Court has been established or not as incorporated in Paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India. Over and above that, the idea behind the emergence of the Sixth Schedule provision is to provide constitutional autonomy to the tribals (hill tribes) so as to enable themselves to preserve and protect their land, custom, culture, tradition and ethnic identity. As a matter of fact, non-tribals are constitutionally excluded from enjoying the provision of the Sixth Schedule to the constitution of India. Therefore, non-tribals are debarred from becoming members in the legislature of the District Council and they (non-tribals) are also constitutionally not allowed to own land in the Sixth Schedule Area. In such away, if non-tribals can own land in the TTADC area and if non-tribals can become member of the legislature (MDC) in TTADC, it

amounts to gross violation of the provision of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India. Therefore, the tribal population of Tripura should be conscious whether they are properly facilitated or knowingly denied their constitutional rights or not?

4.3. Reservation of seats for Scheduled Caste and Schedule Tribes in Legislature

Article 330 lays down special provision for reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the House of People (Lok Sabha) and Article 332 also lays down special provision for reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Legislative Assemblies of the States (Vidhyan Sabha). It is also laid down in the same provision that the reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes shall be done in proportion to their population. In the same way, reservation also has been accorded to tribal population of Tripura too.¹⁵

4.4. Reservation of Scheduled Caste and Schedule Tribes for services and posts

Article 335 claims reservation of services and posts for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The claims of the members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes shall be taken into consideration, consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration, in the making of appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State. Article 335 shall be read with Article 46 which provides that the State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of people and, in particular, the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. (This statement has been confirmed by Comptroller V Jaganathan, AIR 1987 SC 537).¹⁶

4.5. National Commission for Scheduled Tribes

Article 338A (1) provides that there shall be a Commission for the Scheduled Tribes to be known as the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes. Article 338(2) provides for composition of the commission and Article 338 (3) states that the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and three other Members of the Commission shall be appointed by the President of India by warrant under his hand and seal. Article 338 (4) lays down the powers and responsibilities of the Commission and Article 338(5) lays down the duties of the Commission. Whereas Article 338 (8) provides the investigating and summoning powers of the Commission. It is laid down in Article 338 (5) that it shall be the duty of the Commission¹⁷

- a) to investigate and monitor all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the Scheduled Tribes under the Constitution or under any other law for the time being in force or under any order of the Government and to evaluate the working of such safeguards;
- b) to inquire into specific complaints with respect to the deprivation of rights and safeguards of the Scheduled Tribes;
- c) to participate and advise on the planning process of socio-economic development of the Scheduled Tribes and to evaluate the progress of their development under the Union and State;
- d) to present to the President, annually and at such other times as the Commission may deem fit, reports upon the working of those safeguards;
- e) to make in such reports recommendations as to the measures that should be taken by the Union or any State for the effective implementation of those safeguards and other measures for the protection, welfare and socio-economic development of the Scheduled Tribes; *and*

fy to discharge such other functions in relation to the protection, welfare and development and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes as the President may, subject to the provision of any law made by Parliament, by rule specify

Tribals of Tripura like tribals in other parts of India and other North Eastern states are facilitated with different constitutional provision, however, it is doubtful whether the constitutional provisions are effectively implemented or not. It should be noted that the Supreme Court under Article 32 and High Court under Article 226 can be approached in case of violation of fundamental rights. It is evident that with regard to the Sixth Schedule also certain provisions are not effectively implemented. The reason being, land revenue is not under the control of the TTADC and even non-tribals can become MDC against the spirit of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India. Seats also have been reserved for tribals in legislature and in services. And there are provisions for reporting to the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes in the event of violation of the rights of the tribals. It is evident that the provision of special provision inserted for tribals in different states in Article 371 and corresponding articles have missed out the tribals of Tripura. There is special provision for Nagaland in Article 371 (A), for Assam in Article 371 (B), for Manipur in Article 371 (C), for Sikkim in Article 371 (F), for Mizoram in Article 371 (G) and for Arunachal Pradesh in Article 371 (H).¹⁸ However, Tripura has not been mentioned and there is no special safeguards for tribals of Tripura in the said provision.

Issues and Challenges of youths of Tripura and constitutional perspective

The political history of Tripura is a combination of different status and position. Tripura began as a sovereign independent

kingdom which was ruled by Manikya dynasty and it was claimed to be an ancient kingdom which began flourishing since 600 BC. However, Tripura experienced many ups and down in political development and the kingdom was under the political domination of the Mohammedan between 1618-1761. The Mohammedan plundered, looted and drained away the wealth of Tripura during its rule. After that, the East India Company began entering Tripura and Tripura remained under the political dominance of the British Government in India. As a matter of fact, Tripura remained under the rule of British Empire till the independence of India. Tripura was included among the 662 princely states of India and it continued to be ruled by the Manikya dynasty but the succeeding kings were under the suzerainty of the British Empire. However, the status of Tripura changed from bad to worse after independence. The merger to Indian Union and repeated influx of refugees from across the international border changed the demography of the state and the tribals who are ancestral land owners become minority in their own native land. Therefore, the native tribals become marginalized in their own land and they are deprived of certain privileges and facilities. Over and above that, the governing authority and administration did not take up appropriate measures for preservation and protection of the rights of the indigenous people. As such, tribals began their demand through democratic method from the platform of Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti (TUJS) which was followed by violent armed struggle by Tripura National Volunteer (TNV), All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) and National Liberation of Tripura (NLFT). Thus, the changing political status of Tripura has psychologically effected the tribal youths of Tripura and they have the nationalist zeal to

return to their past glory in history. Thus, many youths were influenced by violence method to claim and fight for their rights. However, it should be noted the solution for solving the complexed problems do not lay in taking up arms and violent methods.

The tribal youths of Tripura should be aware of their constitutional rights and they should also know what are the provisions provided to them and what constitutional provisions are still denied to them. Therefore, they should be conscious of the issues and challenges which they are facing and which they have to face in future. The tribal youths should first be concerned with development of human resources and infrastructural developments. It is evident that tribal youths should emphasize development of human resources. The term "Resources" in a common parlance can be described as supply of an asset and "Resources" in a literary terminology can be formulated as the available assets. Human-beings require various assets for their existence and these various assets as multi-faceted needs are readily supplied to human-beings by the immediate natural environment. Rocks, minerals, soils, rivers, plants and animals are the natural assets of the gift of nature but they become resources only after man locates them and utilize them effectively for their overall economic development. Moreover, the relative importance of a resource varies depending upon the needs of man in the different periods of human history. Mobilization refers to making the services of something ready for service. So, mobilizations of resources signify the utilization of various types of resources for the benefit of mankind. Classifying on the basis of their continued availability, resources may also be categorized as renewable and non-renewable resources, Resources like forest

and water which do not get exhausted in a few years but which can be used continuously are called renewable resources. Whereas non-renewable resources signify resources like mineral resources which may get exhausted in a few years. Indeed, various resources may not be mobilized in the right perspective if human resources are not adequately developed. The reason being, human resources are the most important resources of a nation. As a matter of fact, nations like United State, Germany, Japan, United Kingdom and France etc, developed their natural resources only after development of human skills and technology. Hence development of human resources is a requisite trend for effective mobilization of all types of resources.¹⁹ Therefore, tribal youths of Tripura should focus upon development and improvement of human resources because constitutional safeguards cannot be claimed and people cannot fight for their rights if human resources are not adequately developed. The vision, objectives and priorities of the national Youth Policy, 2014 are – to create a productive workforce, develop a strong and healthy generation, instil social values and promote community service, facilitate participation and civic engagement, to support youths at risk and to create equitable opportunities for all. Thus, the National Youth Policy, 2014 aims to empower youths of the country to achieve their full potential and it also aims to enable India to find its rightful place in the community of nations.²⁰

The tribal youths should individually and collectively struggle and fight for development of human resource. Individual efforts can be given by building up one's career in the right perspective. Over and above that, collective efforts are also required for establishment and effective functioning of schools, colleges and governmental institutions and offices for benefit of people

particularly youths in the tribal areas. Therefore, the tribal youths should build up themselves academically with sound educational background and they should fight and claim for all their constitutional rights in the right perspectives. As a saying goes 'Pen is mightier than sword', constitutional rights and protection and preservation of the tribal people can be claimed and guaranteed in a stringer way by fighting with pen than fighting with gun. The tribal youths should build up themselves academically and they should excel in civil services and politics so as to lead the tribal society in better position. Over and above that, they should also analyse constitutional provisions, such as, fundamental rights, Sixth Schedule and functioning of the ITADC, reservation of seats for tribals in legislature, reservation of seats for tribals in services, implication of the functioning of the National Commission for the Scheduled Tribes in Tripura and the constitutional rights which are still denied to tribals of Tripura. They should be aware of the issues and challenges which lay ahead of them and they should boldly face the challenges in the right perspectives. As youths are pillars of the Nation, tribal youths need to be build up academically and their human resources should be mobilised to the maximum in order to reform and build up the tribal society of Tripura.

Conclusion

Youth also refers to young people who are energetic and who are in the prime of their life. Youth is an important concept as a stage of human life span. Tribal youths in Tripura have potential and capacity for improvement but they are handicapped by certain environmental factors. The hill tribes of North East India remained unexposed to other cultures of the country until the advent of the British rule. The tribes had their own chiefs and

they governed themselves by following their traditional custom, culture and ethic. The origin of the kingdom of Tripura was could be traced back to 600 B.C. and Tripura was colonised by the Mohammedan and the British one after another. However, Tripura experienced heavy influx from East Pakistan after its merger with the Indian Union and the native inhabitants are outnumbered by the outsiders. As such, tribals began movement for survival which led to the birth of TUJS, TNV, AFFT and NLFT. Constitutional privileges and facilities have been provided to tribals of Tripura; however, some of the constitutional provisions are wisely twisted and are not effectively implemented. The abrupt change in the political status of Tripura really hurt the feelings of the tribal youths, as such; some youths aspire to fight for their rights with guns. Therefore, tribal youths of Tripura should be aware of the issues and challenges which lay ahead of them and they should boldly face it by building up human resources with sound educational background and academic excellence. The tribal youths should also know that solution of social and economic problem does not lay in armed struggle. Instead of armed struggle, the tribal youths of Tripura should fight and claim for their constitutional rights and facilities in accordance with the Constitution of India. In such a way, wrongs which have been exerted in the form of violation of the constitutional provision be corrected in a legal and constitutional manner. Thus, tribal youths of Tripura should be conscious that so long as their human resources are fully developed, they may not be able to render any meaningful contribution for educational and socio-economic upliftment of the tribal society of Tripura. Therefore, tribal youths of Tripura should know that they should cautiously and constitutionally claim for the rights which are not

effectively delivered to them. Hence, tribal youths of Tripura should guide the destiny of their society by boldly, wisely and effectively facing the issues and challenges which are ahead of them.

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Socio-Cultural Transition and Tribal Youth in Ethnic Identity Mosaic : Yogendra Singh's Paradigm for an Integrated Approach

Thomas Molsom

Introduction

Modernization, westernization, Sanskritization and Christianization etc. brought intensified changes that escalated also in identity formation among tribal communities which is indeed a process of social change and a result of modernization. As Mysore Narasimhacharya Srinivas (Srinivas ed. 1992) carried the idea of "*Sanskritization*" asserting in the process by which a low caste or tribe or other group takes on the customs, rituals, beliefs, ideology and styles of life of a higher caste or tribe. Today, tribal communities wished to be acknowledged by their original and ancestors names and not by other names that mostly other people or outsiders attributed to them. Since, ancestral origin, language and culture play a fundamental role for determining elements for ethnic identity –formation of the tribal community. Consequently, cultural symbols are generally used as a means of identity assertion manifested through various movements like Sanskritization, Hinduization, Christianisation and Westernization being the fundamental causes. Therefore, the construction of ethnic identity by ethnic minority groups can proceed in numerous ways. New concepts such as transnationalism and hybridity have emerged to help grapple with the changing contour of ethnicity in the contemporary global context. Changes brought about especially resulted among

youths or new generation. The Tribes of Noatia demonstrates the complexity of these processes as well as its specificity which resulted from the social context in which it has been forming. Noatias are, one of the major tribe of Tripura. However, their number has been shrinking time to time. Indeed, as recorded by tribe -wise population census in the year of 1951, their population was only 1,916. However, recent censuses brought their numbers into increased i.e. there are no authentic data regarding number of the tribe of Noatia. Mostly, Noatias are known to be the new comer or last entrant tribe in the land of Tripura.

Many changes have been brought about in their culture life as Noatia people got mixed up with other tribes and non -tribes, who have also migrated from elsewhere. Henceforth Noatias are facing lot of social, cultural, religious and ethnic challenges. Today, the major problems among the tribe of Noatias are in process of losing their own ethnic identity as Noatia and resulted into claiming to be Tripuri tribe. As Dr. Surajit Sengupta (2015) in his writings of *'Socio-Economic study of tribal Migrant Labourers in Agartala'* reflected that some of the Noatia tribes do not write their surname as Noatia anymore, but as Tripuri. They mostly live in almost all the districts of Tripura, but they are hardly recognised. Therefore, with the changing times such as Modernization, Sanskritization, Christianization, urbanization and demographic transition, individualistic orientations resulted in problem retaining their own ethnic identity. The number of Noatia has been shrinking at phenomenal rate. Changes resulted especially among youths that migration took place to towns and cities and acceptance of small family norm etc. It is like they are moving away from their own tradition. Noatias have their own traditional

religion known as animism, observing their own spirit worship, rites, rituals and practices, but their very own old traditional relation is vanishing away, only few older generation practice their traditional religion. As a result many of them have adopted religions like Hinduism and Christianity which resulted into absorption of new ethnic Identity. Therefore, the present study endeavours to understand changes among the tribes of Noatia of Tripura, especially among youths. This work mainly focuses on understanding changes of socio-cultural in the domain of Noatia from sociological analysis.

Noatias

Noatias are believed to be the last entrant to the Tripura race, who had come from East Pakistan or particularly from Chittagong hill tracts of Bangladesh. However, Noatias are known to be akin with the tribes of *Tripurians* in respect of socio-cultural rites, rituals and customs etc. (Sutradhar: 2014). It is believed that ruler of Tripura had arranged for their second time settlement in Tripura after staying outside the state in Arakan and Chittagong (2010, 39). Because, historically, it has become accepted that those who had been living in the territory of Tripura for many generations are to be called original *Tripurians*. Some scholars believed that Noatias could have been the original inhabitants of Tripura State. Anthropologist like T.H. Lewin, R.H. Sneyd Hutchincho had classified the tribes of Noatias under the *Tripuris* (Saha: 1986; 7). As Lewin states, “the great Nowultea clan with its many subdivisions living for the most part in the Mong Rajah’s country, on the banks of Fenny, are in close contact with the Bengalees of the plains, they are consequently addicted to Hindu superstitions and observances, and I regret to say that latterly they have been some slight indications that the most important man among them

are postering the hurtful and obnoxious doctrines of caste and niceties of feeding" (cited in Saha: 1986; 7).

In C.1512 A.D. Maharaja Dharma Manikya occupied Arakan, many Tripuri soldiers were attracted by the means of easy livelihood available in the territory. Thus many soldiers began to settle in *Arakan* hill Tracts permanently. In Arakan, these Tripuris tribals began to settle at '*Naitong*'. According to Burmese language '*Naitong*' means a Hillock of bad omens (Saha: 1986; 8). Therefore, "gradually marriages took place between the Burmese and the Tripuri tribals and the different Burmese titles such as *Naitong*, *Monghai*, *Tonghai* and *Khakla* were conferred on them" (ibid; 8). These Tripuris again then came in contact with some *Chakmas* and *Mogs* who were predominantly inhabited in *Akrakon* and *Chittagong hill* tracts. In which marriages took place between these tribes, also accepted some customs and culture by the tribes of Tripuri. Such mixed contacts with the Burmese, the Chakmas and the Mogs brought Tripuri tribals into a 'new tribe' who came to consider themselves different from the Tripuris. And "After a long interval, these *Tripuris* tribes returned to their homeland with new trends and culture of society which they could not give up due to long practices" (ibid: 8). Nevertheless, yet another account acquaint with that, the *Naitia* the title was given by the king of Tripura in the remote past. The story goes in such that some of the *Naitias*, who had just arrived in the Tripura soil, want to meet their new ruler. They dressed in new garments with uniformity styles that surprised the king on such sort of sight. Hence, he gave them the name *Naitia* which means, 'a new comer in a new dress'.

Hence, the new *Tripuris* of this territory then came to be known as the '*Naitia*' or '*katal*' community. The term '*katal*' in kokborok

language means 'New'. The term 'Noatia' also literary means "New". This tradition led many people to think that the Noatia community has been a mixed tribe and treated as '*New comers*'. It may be presumed that various tribals such as the Tribals, the Burmese, the chakmas and the Mogs have been corporate in this community (Saha: 1986; 8).

New Trend among Youths in Socio - Cultural transition

There are both tribal and non-tribal in the land of Tripura. The extreme migration of non-tribal people in the state has brought a great impact significant through which initially it affects their cultural tradition and institutions. Therefore, the assimilation of different culture; especially the impact of Bengali culture have created drastic changes in the cultural life of Noatias i.e. Noatias get assimilated with other community through religious groups especially among which to some extent their cultural practices are left behind. For instance, in modern times, the use of traditional crafts and equipment like pots, mats etc are found rarely used among the tribe of Noatia. In earlier shifting cultivation is part of their cultural activities; in which certain religious rites, rituals and festivals were done mainly during the harvesting of crops. In this regards T.K Oommen(2009) explains that the culture change being brought market forces are largely in the realm of consumption that the intrusion of market forces led to substantial changes in the consumption pattern of tribes as manifested in food, dress, ceremonies, recreation and related cultural items and practices. But this does not mean the old cultural items are completely displaced. In fact, traditional dresses are still vogue but only during certain ritual and ceremonial occasions. But often it is a mutation of the old and the new, the traditional and the modern. Another example of change being brought by market

influence is, generally, one popular cloth that from the last decades has been observed impacted in dress used by both men and women, that is brought by the Bengalis culture called 'Kamsa' i.e. a small piece of cloth.

Changes happen in the family structure, because in modern times socialisation takes place mostly outside the village as children leave the village at an early age for the sake of education. Indeed some children leave their home and village stay in hostels or houses of relatives or friends also some lives in rented houses. Most of the parents let their children study in urban areas for good education which is not available in the villages. Thus, the new generation begin incorporating new liberal values and ideas that leads to declining of their traditional joint family system due to engaging in urban education or other communities. Youths generally prefer to be in cities within the state or outside for their education. In some cases, parents let their children stay in boarding in Christian missionaries schools for their good education. As a result, many of those who have completed their college studies have found jobs with the Government and planned to settle down in the cities or towns rather in the village, thus traditional ways of socialisation and religious instruction which were done at home and at village dormitories is replaced by modern education. With the spread of education and modern value system, there has been a growing individualism in economic interests. The changing can also be seen in marriage pattern, because young generation mostly live in urban areas came in contact with different groups. It is like they build more relations with other groups rather than with their own community. As a result, exogamous marriages are taking place at great extent to their traditional family structure. As furthermore, K.L.

Sharma(2008 ;154) remarks that joint family is more among the upper and upper -middle castes than the lower caste and class people, because higher education is found more among the upper and lower caste.

Utilizing Yogendra Singh’s Paradigm for an Integrated Approach to see Socio-cultural Changes among Noatia’s Youths of Tripura (Traditionalization towards modernization)

Sources of Change	Cultural Structure		Social Structure	
	Little Tradition	Great Tradition	Micro Structure	Macro Structure
Hetero-genetic changes (exogenous)	Primary westernization (Emergence of churches) and changes in the values, ideology, birth names in the family etc.	Secondary impact of western churches (festivals like Christmas, Good Friday, Easter Sunday etc)	New legitimacy of Christian church identity in the family and decline of traditional practices or importance of Ochai’s.	1.Electoral system in churches, 2.Christian education, 3. new structure of elites and leadership 4. Administration and associations
Ortho-genetic Changes (endogenous)	Influence of Bengali Hindus - imitation of dresses, rites, language, etc	Durga puja, Sankranti, kali puja etc. festivals	1. Imitation from the Bengali Hindu ‘Sadhus’ or Priest as ‘Ochais’. 2. migration or population shift	Circulation of elites in Hindu - Religious priest (Ochai’s) , and Charismatic Leader such as Pastor, Priest

Source: - Yogendra Singh(1986: p25)

Singh (1986) describes that modernization in India begins either from the endogenous or exogenous in the social systems. The two bases of these initiations of social change should be analysing both at 'social structure' and 'traditions' levels. Thus, Y.Singh, rather focusing on the historicity of Indian culture and civilization, maintained critical consciousness in arriving at an 'integrated approach' for exploring the resilience of culture in the Indian context. The above paradigm depicts that the distinction between cultural structure and social structure is presented to focus Orthogenetic patterns or Endogenous in the culture and social structures and Heterogenetic changes or exogenous represents the gradual changes from the Orthogenetic changes such as heterogenic changes shown in the paradigm are the outcome of the emergence of different churches in the village that also led changes in the little tradition like values, ideals, in the family etc. On the other hand after conversion to Christianity, great tradition have emerged in the form of Christian festivals like Christmas, Good Friday, Easter Sunday etc.

Generally, Orthogenetic source of changes in villages are through the assimilation of Bengali Hindu religion and culture that changes resulted in dresses, customs, language etc. The changes can also be observed, at the great tradition with the observance of Durga puja, Kali puja and Saraswati puja etc, which are basically Bengali festivals. As the above paradigm depicts the changes can also be found in micro structure and macro structure level as discussed by Y. Singh. Micro structure changes of heterogenetic include at first the assimilation of Bengali Hindu culture that have changed in their traditional practices of shifting cultivation to Plough cultivation and also decreases the significance of the Ochai in the family. The emergence of

individualism also brought a new legitimacy of church identity in the family that also revealed a decline of their traditional practices or importance of Ochais.

In Macro level far more changes have been resulted such as in marriage, religious practices and migration or population shift, which especially among youths. For example, as the study found that, in past village religious practices are mainly done by the Ochais (Priest) and village administration system decisions are taken more legitimated. But in present time, even in village administration committee has influenced by Bengali Hindus. In fact, the decline of their traditional village administration authority over Christian families are also coming into pictured and led to various changes; such as Christian education and new structure of elites and leadership for example - Deacon, pastor, Priest father etc and led to establishment of new different administration and youth association.

At the structural level the family structure has also undergone changes. The extended family structure has been breaking down resulting in the formation of smaller units. This has led to the formation of nuclear families. Introduction of formal education, gainful employment outside the family and new religious practices has weakens the traditional way of life. Customs and rituals have become a fusion of tradition and modernity. Regarding the extended families transformation to the nuclear family based society in the Noatias at recent phase. To this kind of transformation ,Y Singh (1986:173) views that the transition from extended family based society to nuclear family based society is thus, in essence, an example of structural change since. This involves systematic changes in role structures through process of differentiation. The spread of education has immensely brought

in a new value system that upholds individual freedom and less dependence on the group for decision making. As a result the spread of individualism, obligatory kinship duties and a sense of belonging to the kin group are slowly and steadily disappearing.

Insight of Conversion among Youths

The advent of Christianity and Education introduced many changes in their lifestyles and also new habits. It is observed that changes were 'especially noticeable among the Christian families in the village of Noatias with the recent coming of Christianity. Due to conversion into Christianity and Education Noatias's begin to use new language as medium for communication which made them easier to communicate with others tribes such changes made them to refuse their previous traditional belief and practices, but rather the process of westernization and modernization are taking place. With the new religion i.e. Christianity, the people even reject their traditional festivals and ceremonies and other cultural traits such as the oral tradition which was only a myth, legends and folklore, to some extent. As rightly said by Bhattacharjee that 'some religions merely focus on the subjective experience of an individual,' it is the same experience that occurred among the youths who converted to Christianity in village. The youths studied outside their village boundary and came into contact with many experiences that they are affected by it and led them to convert to Christianity or any other religious group. The people who still believe in their religious practices, it is they think that the activities of the community to be most important.

Evidently, as all societies have possessed some kind of beliefs that always come under the term 'religion', these beliefs vary from culture to culture and from tradition to tradition; but whatever the variety in things supernatural, we define religion as any act

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of attitudes, beliefs and practices pertaining to supernatural power, whether it be forces, gods, spirits, ghosts, demons or any other imagined power. In which a religion become as said by Clifford Geertz, "is a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive and long lasting moods and motivations in men by formulating conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic" (Geertz:1993;90).

Today, youths of Noatias are in transition, inevitably exposed, as they are, to the influences of modernity and social forces. Owing to the impact of the Hindus and the forces of modernity like education, urbanisation and above all, Christianity, certain sections of the Youths have become acculturated and culturally alienated from their parent or own people who talk tradition even today. Consequently, such new generation have developed different styles of life and a network of social contact that have almost ceased to interact with their parent group with the same frequency and intensity, in some cases especially the converted Christians relation being strained and marked by even mutual animosity. The main reason behind conversion to Christianity is to empower one's identity that led to a new attitude of service that basic facilities are offered by Missionaries etc. Since, Christianity is a worldwide recognised religion, and one can be considered as having a dominant religion, hence, especially youths after coming contact outside their community gain knowledge that being Christianity gives you greater identity, makes you more fashionable. The work of pioneer missionaries also saw a visible change in the attitude of people towards others in need. Hence, majority of the tribes are inspired by the work of missionaries.

Another example that would make point clear as explained by Clifford Geertz(1993) that he emphasize on three specific points where chaos – tumult of events which lack not just interpretations but interpretability – threatens to break in upon man: at time limits of his analytic capacities, at the limits of his powers of endurance, and the limits of his moral insight. Bafflement, Suffering and Evil or a sense of intractable ethical paradox are all. In these three types of experiences Christianity or the work of missionaries considered as charismatic leader that changes the attitude of the people. For example, in Chandul village of youths (study area) when they are willing to convert their religion, many sort of threaten or torture were thrown upon them by the *traditional Nontia Hada* System. Hopeless and helpless youths would go to the missionaries or evangelists in search of comfort and consultation, as expected youths would receive comfort and consultation through Bible verses, such as “I have decided to follow Jesus no turning back, no turning back” meaning no matter what you faced problem in your life, being Christian you should not give upon the true God, Jesus Christ. Thus Geertz (1993:101) outlines that those able to embrace them, and for so long as they are able to embrace them, religious symbols provide a cosmic guarantee not only for their ability to comprehend the world, but also, comprehending it, to give a precision to their feeling, a definition to their emotions which enables them, joyfully, to endure it.

T.K. Oommen also observed that Christian missionaries nurtured the identities of tribes through developing their mother tongues; translating Bible into tribal languages was a revolutionary step. However, used of foreign language is prevails in large extent because today English is the most visible language

of the any region in the formal public spheres such as courts and other higher education. Hence, this is instance of partial of displacement of a cultural item. He further said that due to converting to Christianity, there are instances of the earlier cultural values and practices that are being replaced by the new ones. The tribal solidarity based on village collectivism is gradually disappearing and individualism is making fast inroads.

Henceforth, the heterogenic being replaced by homogeneity shown, is the outcome of the emergence of the new church in the village and creating changes in the little tradition like values, ideals, birth name in the family etc. On the other hand after conversion to Christianity, great tradition have emerge in the form of Christian festivals like Christmas, Good Friday, Easter Sunday etc. In fact, change is resulted even in Ethnic Identity formation that gradually Noatia people change their Identity and claimed to be known as *Tripuri Tribe* as G. Bera(2014) remark in his article "*Sanskritization and State formation*" that the subalterns are the people who live in the lower strata of the society with an imagination and consciousness that are different from the dominants of the society. They have a relatively independent consciousness despite their participation or engagement in the movements led by the dominant elites. Bandopadhyay (2003) opines that 'there is a structural dichotomy between the two domains of elite politics and those of the subalterns, as the two segments of Indian society live in two distinct forms of consciousness. This phenomena can also be speak about in term of relative deprivation which refers to deprivation experienced that when individuals or groups compare themselves with others that lacking something in comparison to other groups i.e. having the feeling of deprivation.

Conclusion

Y. Singh tried to explain in his paradigm that how orthogenetic and heterogenetic factors have contributed change in society. In the process of change in India, Singh (1986: 120) pointed out three important ramifications: the traditional, the modern and traditional modern. The last ramification represents paramount significant in the process of cultural change and importantly suited to the socio-cultural conditions of the Noatias. In their every cultural activity is shown the transformation and modification in the context of modernisation. For example, the traditional and religious practices are undergoing changes towards the western model of modernisation. In terms of education, establishment of new church, using electronic devices, mobile phones brought about change to a great extent in the village level. Therefore, the impact of modernisation in the culture plays a pivotal in declining of their cultural practices and moved towards modernity. Noatias, because of adopting Bengali culture and Christian values that incorporated to their culture, though for the time being they are less in number converting to Christianity but gradually conversion is taking place to Christianity; especially in the village of my study Chandul ADC village. As Pathak (1998: 157) claims that encounter with the west we are losing our traditional and cultural ideals'. Later, through exogenous changes with the emergence of new churches, produces new role of differentiation and new occupational innovation led also change their ethnic identity. Therefore, alteration or change can be observed in the socio-cultural life, family structure also in new Ethnic formation.

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Issues and Challenges of Education of Tribal Women in Tripura

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Introduction

Tripura is a small hilly state in North-east India. As per census report of India 2011, the literacy rate of Tripura is 87.22%. The literacy rate of tribal community is 79.05%. Among them the male literacy rate is 91.5% and the female literacy rate is 82.7%. Education is the most important element for the development of any community. Perhaps Education is commonly referred to as the process of learning and obtaining knowledge towards development. Education and functional literacy both are related for development of tribal community. So education is an important avenue for upgrading the economic and social conditions of the tribal people.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the status of tribal women in Tripura.
2. To highlight the gender roles among tribal society.
3. To explain the issues and challenges of tribal women education.

Methodology

The study is basically based on secondary data. The sources of information were collected from various books, journals, library, census report websites etc.

Status of Tribal Women in Tripura

The status of tribal women can be judged mainly by the roles they play in society. The status of women in any society is a

significant reflection of the level of social justice in that society. Women's status is often described in terms of their level of income, employment, education, health and fertility as well as their roles within the family, the community and society. For instance, the first language of over 80 percent of the tribal population in the state is Kokborok. Again most of the tribal people have their own tribal custom and belief but in the broader sense of religion, they are believed to be followers of Hinduism. There is also some Homogeneity regarding marriage rules, property rights, food and drinking habits, dress patterns, housing patterns and other such activities among different tribes.

Gender roles in Tribal Society

Gender is a constitutive element in all social relations. The term Gender refers to the social classification of men and women as 'masculine and feminine' (Oakley, 1972: 16) and their expected behaviour based on their assigned social roles (Basin, 2000). The different roles that are described to men and women are socially and culturally determined and influenced by traditional practices, institutions, customs and beliefs. Most of the societies in north-east India are patriarchal society where men dominate and exercise control considered superior to women.

Women constitute the economic backbone in each of the tribal communities. Several studies on tribal women of north-east India reveal that like all hill women, they are physically and socially fitted to lead a life of extreme hardship. Social relations between the sexes in most cases are easy and natural; men and women generally meet freely on equal basis. In tribal communities, the role of women is substantial and crucial. However tribal women face problems and challenges in getting a sustainable livelihood and a decent life due to environment of out riders.

Issues and challenges of tribal women of education in Tripura

Education is very important in promoting upward social mobility. People with higher levels of education generally get good opportunities for social mobility – say, for getting better jobs, earning more money and maintaining a better life-style. Tribal women in general are much more vulnerable to such socialization. The educational disparity as exists in between men and women over the decades 1981-2011 have been shown in Table no.1 (tribal literacy vs nontribal literacy).

Tribal literacy as compared to non-tribal literacy in Tripura

Year	Percentage of literates to the tribal population			Percentage of literates to the non-tribal population		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1981	33.46	12.27	23.07	57.33	39.33	48.73
1991	43.56	18.39	30.86	68.43	45.53	56.98
2001	53.46	24.29	38.86	79.33	51.44	65.38
2011	86.4	71.6	79	91.5	82.7	87.22

Source: Census Report: 1981, 1991, 2001 & 2011

The table is depicting the trend of tribal literacy as compared to literacy of non-tribal and the total population in Tripura.

It also appears that although the trend of female literacy is on the increase over the decades, there is a considerable disparity in the rates of literacy in between tribal and non-tribal women still exists in the society. Women, too face different issues and challenges in education. Now, we can focus on some major issues and challenges related to the education of tribal women residing in Tripura, as follows –

Financial Problems

Most of the tribal people do not realize about the benefits of education for their children. A majority of tribes are living in poverty, so is a hardship for them to send their children to schools or continue education up to higher level. Instead, they prefer children to share works in forestry, agriculture and other household activities with the cause of earning a living.

Lack of guidance from parents

Most of the tribal parents are involved in agriculture and other household skilled works. They have no little knowledge about the modern world and modern society. They have not very clear vision regarding showing awareness about the education of their wards. Motivation and encouragement from the part of the parents in pursuance of education of their children is really lacking. For this tribal women are deprived from the scope of education.

Fewer opportunities for higher studies

Though Government has taken initiatives to establish various educational institutions for higher learning in district or sub-divisional level, yet most of the tribal women are not getting the better chance. It is fact that in spite of providing scholarships, some one cannot be on the cost of higher education due to financial constraints.

Nature of Habitat

Most of the tribal villagers live in hilly and remote areas. There is no sufficient number of school-college and good infrastructures for the tribal students. Moreover, the hilly habitations sometimes create genuine obstacles to take education of tribal girl students for their education. This is real problem in promoting women education.

Medium of study

Tribal women of all levels generally find this one as a serious challenge. Sometimes they feel alienated in pursuing their study. In maximum number of schools and colleges the medium of instruction is Bengali, which is certainly not their mother tongue. From text book preparation to teaching-learning interaction all activities are done through non-tribal language as medium. So, it is a big issue for them.

Communication Problem

It is another challenging issue for tribal women. Any communication largely stands on a particular language. Here they commonly suffer from the problem of communication with others. Actually they are not frequent enough to share their ideas, views and opinions with non-tribal students. They are facing problem for discussing their doubt with teachers and others for their language problem.

Lack of Teachers

In most educational institutions there is a strong dearth of tribal teachers who are actually capable of delivering teaching even with their mother tongue. Most of tribal students do not understand the subject matters properly due to practice through other language. As they are facing the problem from the very beginning, so it may create a major problem in their further education.

Traditional Curriculum

Traditional Curriculum is irrelevant in modern education system, so tribal students may be satisfied to follow the traditional curriculum. Even in-course of study practices their mother languages are not encouraged in classroom teaching.

Some other problems are nutritional problem, accommodation problem, geographical isolation, and lack of study materials on

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tribal languages, violence, insecurity feelings regarding social and economic condition.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Generally in a society, education is the most effective vehicle for socializing its members both male and female through imparting values, moulding aspirations. The educational status of women is related to age at marriage. The prevalent trend in the village is that poverty compels poor parents to think that girl is a headache for the family and as such they can get relief from the problem. The educational status of tribal women is not satisfactory. Economically women are highly dependent on men or head of the family. They have to be engaged to petty services of household based works. Poverty is the most important reason for women illiteracy along with engagement of girl child to household petty jobs on matters pertaining to economic expenditure like family budgets, child education etc. If economic stability and security as well as cultural pursuits of tribal women are incorporated and balanced in education system of the state, then they can probably find their cultural identity. The target of mainstreaming tribal women towards educational establishment can be achieved a lot. Already different efforts had been initiated through different tribal welfare schemes and programmes have been provided by the state Govt. of Tripura. It can be concluded that the problem of the status of women is eclectic in nature owing to adherence of women to traditional values and ethos of socio-cultural setup that they find difficult to come out from.

Some suggestions to overcome issues and challenges of tribal women education –

1. Creating awareness about importance of education among tribal students.

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2. Parental awareness and counselling about the importance of girl child education.
3. Different NGOs should come forward with their schemes and plans prepared in accordance with the interests and choices of tribal students.
4. Merit scholarship, attendance scholarship etc. should be provided for their financial support.
5. Free text books, dresses etc. should be arranged for tribal girl students up to higher education level.
6. Hostel facilities with all amenities should be arranged to both tribal girls and boys students.
7. Better transportation should be arranged in villages and remote areas.
8. Gender sensitization is highly necessary for all levels of persons including family and society.
9. Issues related to women, like their protection, welfare, development and empowerment along with health, nutrition, employment.

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Ethnic Groups and Demand of Autonomy in North East India

Joseph C.Lalremruata

North East India was earlier comprised of seven states such as – Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura known as seven sisters, Sikkim is now included in the North Eastern region and there are now eight states in the North East India. The region accounts for 8 per cent of the total land surface of India and constitutes about 3.8 per cent of the total population of India (2001 census). Over 68 per cent of this population lives in the state of Assam alone. The history of North East can be traced back to the Ahom Kingdom which was established in the Brahmaputra valley by the Shans, who had migrated from upper Burma in the first half of the 13th century. The region is inhabited by different ethnic groups of people both hills men and plains men having diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds of their origin. Over 220 ethnic groups of people belonging to general, scheduled tribes, scheduled castes and other backward classes (OBC) and more than 325 languages/ dialects are found in the North East region. The people of the region have followed various religions like Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Muslim etc., so that the important characteristics of the present North East region are certainly multi-ethnicity, multi-linguistic, multi-religious and composite culture.

Prior to the British period, the region of North East India was fragmented into a number of small independent political entities ruled by several native kings and chiefs under various forms of indigenous political systems. The region was slowly and gradually under the British rule and remained one part of British territory till the British left India in 1947. For the sake of administrative convenience in the plains and the hills areas, the British adopted a separate administration for these two. Under the Govt. of India Act of 1935, the hills areas of the then Assam province fell into three – firstly the **Excluded Areas**, which were the Naga Hills, the Lushai Hills and the North Cachar Hills, over these areas the Provincial Government had no jurisdiction at all. Secondly the **Partially Excluded Areas**, which were the Garo Hills, the Mikir Hills and the British portions of the Khasi Hills and the Jaintia Hills other than Shillong Municipality and cantonment, and these areas were administered by the Provincial Government subject to the powers of the Governor to withhold or apply the laws of the Provincial Legislature with or without modifications.¹ In fact, the people of Partially Excluded Areas had much more contact with the people of the plains than the Excluded Areas. Thirdly, the **Frontier Areas**, which were the Halipara, Sadiya and Lakhimpur Tracts inhabited by the tribes in an early stage of development. Despite the idea of the British for creating these special areas might be protecting and preserving these tribes from the plains people who were more

¹ Patnaik, Jagadish, K., Lalithakima. (2008). Mizoram: A Profile. In Jagadish K. Patnaik (eds), *Mizoram Dimensions and Perspective: Society, Economy and Polity* (9-12). Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 2008, p.10.

advanced in various ways than the Hills people, this policy has no doubt a longer impact on the hills people that is a feeling of isolationism. Certainly, their connection with the outer world of the plains people was ignored and neglected.

Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India

The Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India came into existence on the recommendation of the North East Frontiers (Assam) Tribal and Excluded Areas sub-committee under the chairmanship of Gopinath Bordoloi the then Chief Minister of Assam. Hence, this sub-committee is also popularly known as Bordoloi Sub-Committee. After the independence of India, there were demands from the tribal people of the hills areas of the then undivided Assam State for better status and regional autonomy for them within the framework of the Constitution of India. The Cabinet Mission was serious about the protection of many tribes and backward classes after India's independence and the Constituent Assembly of India set up an Advisory Committee under the chairmanship of Sardar Vallabhai Patel on January 25, 1947. And the Advisory Committee appointed the Sub-Committee under the leadership of Bordoloi to study this thing and to make proposals and recommendations for governance of the tribals of the hills areas of Assam even to aid and advice the Advisory Committee on the affairs of the North Eastern tribal areas. The Bordoloi Sub-Committee visited various hills areas of Assam and seriously listened to the wish and expectations of the tribal people. They studied carefully the then existing administrative set up in the hill areas of the North East India with a view to setting up of an autonomous body for the administration of the hill areas and thus recommended the setting up of an administrative based on the concept of regional autonomy in all matters relating to

customs, laws of inheritance administration of justice, land, forests etc.²

It was found out that there were certain traditional institutions among the hill tribes of North East India which were so good that it would have been wrong to destroy them. One of the then tribal leaders of North East India, J.J.M.Nichols Roy said that the measure of self-government would make the tribals feel that the whole of Indian was sympathetic with them and nothing was going to be forced on them to destroy their feelings and culture. One of the greatest personalities of India and the then Law Minister of India, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar felt that the tribals of Assam are different from the tribals of other areas of the country. He also felt that the position of tribals of Assam was somewhat analogous to that of Red Indians in the United States of America who constituted a republic by themselves in that country and they were a separate and independent people. Ambedkar agreed that Autonomous District Councils were created to some extent on the lines which were adopted by the United States of America for the purpose of the Red Indians.³

Finally, the report of the Bordoloi Sub-Committee, which was accepted by the Drafting Committee, was approved by the Constituent Assembly of India. Then it was incorporated in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India under Articles 244(2) and 275(1). It included in Part-A and B of the Table appended to

² Rao V.V.(1976). *A Century of Tribal politics in North East India(1874-1974)*. New Delhi: S. Chand & Company. pp.181-183.

³ Robert Tuolar, *Autonomous District Council in North East India with special reference to the North Cachar Hills Autonomous District Council of Assam: A Historical Analysis*. International Journal of Advancement in Research & Technology, Volume 2- Issue 8, August 2013. p. 283.

Paragraph 20 of the Sixth Schedule.⁴ The main idea and objective behind the Sixth Schedule was to provide the tribal people with a simplified and inexpensive administrative set up of their own, which can safeguard their customs and ways of lives and provide autonomy in the management of their affairs, also to bring all round developments of the backward people. Even its aim was also to protect the hills people and other tribal communities from the control and power of the groups and the plains. Hence, the earlier Partially Excluded and Excluded areas hill areas were put under the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India after the independence of India. This led to the creation of District Councils and Regional Councils in the hills areas.

The Implications of Sixth Schedule

The Articles 244(2) and 275(1) are concerned with the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India. Today, this provision is related with the administration of Tribal areas in the State of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura. Under the provision of the Sixth Schedule, Autonomous Districts and Autonomous Regions can be created.

Autonomous Districts and Autonomous Regions

1. Subject to the provision of this paragraph, the tribal areas in each item of parts I, II and IIA and in Part III of the Table appended to paragraph 20 of this Schedule shall be an Autonomous District.
2. If there are different Schedule Tribes in an Autonomous District, the Governor may, by public notification, divide the area or areas inhabited by them into Autonomous Regions.
3. The Governor may, by notification,

⁴ V.V Rao, op.cit., pp. 149-150.

- a) include any area in any of the parts of the said table,
- b) exclude any area from any of the parts of the said table,
- c) create a new autonomous district,
- d) increase the area of any autonomous district,
- e) diminish the area of any autonomous district,
- f) unite two or more autonomous districts or parts thereof,
- g) alter the name of any autonomous district,
- h) define the boundaries of any autonomous district.

These notifications were established with the provision that no order shall be made by the Governor under clause (c), (d), (e) and (f) of this sub-paragraph except after consideration of the report of a Commission appointed under sub-paragraph (1) of paragraph 14 of this Schedule.²

Today, the present North East India has in total 16 tribal Autonomous District Councils existing in the five States. Way back to 1952 & 1953 respectively, there were only five District Councils and one Regional Council in the entire region of North East India and the number of District Councils have increased from 5 to 11 from the beginning to till date. The District Councils have existed in the five States of North East region such as three each in the States of Assam, Meghalaya and Mizoram whereas Tripura has one and six in Manipur. 10 out of 16 Autonomous District Councils namely Assam, Mizoram, Meghalaya and Tripura are under the provision of Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India and the remaining 6-Autonomous District Councils in Manipur are outside the provision of Sixth Schedule. It is very possible to say that the creation of more District Councils

²Bakshi, P.M. (2002). *The Constitution of India (Fifth Edition)*. Delhi: Universal Law Publishing Co. PVT. LTD. p.343.

in the North East region is due to the rising demands for autonomy by various ethnic groups in the region.

We will now analyze the story of the formation of three autonomous district councils under the provision of the Sixth Schedule in the State of Assam. The Dima Hassao District, earlier called as North Cachar Hills District, was created on February 2, 1970. The Dima Hassao District is an autonomous district enjoying Sixth Schedule status granted by the Constitution of India. The Mikir Hills District section was renamed as Karbi Anglong District on October 14, 1976. The name of Karbi Anglong District Council was renamed as Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council after the MOU signed between the Government of Assam and the leaders of the Karbi movement on April 1, 1995. A tripartite Accord was signed in New Delhi on November 25, 2011 between the Karbi insurgent group operating in the Karbi Anglong District of Assam since 1999 known as United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS), the Central Government and the Assam Government, apart from others, to upgrade the existing KAAC to Karbi Anglong Autonomous Territorial Council. A tripartite Memorandum of Settlement on February 10, 2003, between the Centre, Assam Government and the Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT) to create an Autonomous self-governing body known as the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) formed under the provision of the Sixth Schedule and it has been started its functioning from that time. In the earlier times, Bodoland Autonomous Council was functional with smaller powers.⁶

⁶ A.P.K. Singh, *Rising Autonomy Movement in North East India: Repercussion of Article 3 and the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India*. Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies. Vol.4-Issue 9, August 2016. pp.83-84.

In the case of Mizoram, Lushai Hills District Council was set up under the provision of Sixth Schedule on April 25, 1952. The present State of Mizoram was earlier known as Lushai Hills District and it remained as the southernmost district of the then undivided Assam even after the independence of India. In 1972, Mizo District was elevated to Union Territory under the North Eastern Areas Re-organization Act then the Lushai/Mizo Hills District Council was abolished. In its place, the existing Pawi-Lakher Regional Council (PLRC) was dissolved and three Autonomous District Councils were created namely Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC), Lai Autonomous District Council (LADC) earlier known as Pawi ADC and Mara Autonomous District Council (MADC) earlier called as Lakher ADC. These three communities inhabited the southern part of the State. Previously, the Lakher tribes demanded for creating a separate administration for them and this led to the setting up of an Interim Mara District Council. Later on, the Pawi and the Chakma tribes, who did not make any demand in the beginning for setting up of separate District Councils for them, also began demanding for a separate body for the preservation of their cultural values, customs and traditions saying that they were also distinct tribes differed from the Mizos. Despite the creation for separate District Councils for the above three communities were vehemently opposed by many people fearing that this would lead to isolationist feelings among the people in Mizoram, the demand for separate District Councils was successful.

Despite the tribal people of Tripura had been struggling for autonomy since the late 1960s, Tripura had no District Council in the earlier times. It came only after the Tripura Legislative Assembly unanimously passed the Tripura Tribal Areas

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Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) Bill 1979 on March 23, 1979, to form a Council for the tribal people under the provision of the Fifth Schedule to the Constitution of India. The Parliament also passed the Act, 1979 after the indigenous people of Tripura launched several democratic movements. Even though autonomous district council was created in Tripura under the TTAADC Act of 1979, it actually came into existence from January 18, 1982, because the Council was created through vote by secret ballots held on January 15, 1982. By urging the Government of India to apply the provision of Sixth Schedule to the tribal areas of Tripura, the Legislative Assembly of Tripura passed a resolution on March 19, 1982 and again on February 11, 1983. After the Tripura Government recommended the amendment of the Constitution for the enforcement of the Sixth Schedule in the tribal areas of the State, the 49th Amendment Bill to the Constitution of India was unanimously passed by the Indian Parliament on August 23, 1984. Then the TTAADC was upgraded under the provision of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India with effect from April 1, 1985. The TTAADC was a successor to an earlier Council formed in 1982 under the provision of the Fifth Schedule to the Constitution of India and a fresh election under the provision of the Sixth Schedule was held on June 30, 1985.⁷

The Parliament passed the Manipur (Hill Areas) District Council Act, 1971 which paved the way for the establishment of ADCs in the Hill areas of Manipur. At this time, Manipur was Union Territory. After Manipur was elevated to the State in 1972,

⁷ Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council, (<http://en.wikipedia.org.Tripura Tribal-areas>_accessed on 03/03/2017)

the Manipur Government immediately adopted this Central Act by issuing the Manipur (Adaptation of Laws) Order, 1972. And the Six District Councils were created by the Manipur Government on February 14, 1972, as per the provision of the Manipur (Hill Areas) District Council Act, 1971, for the tribal people of the hill areas in the State. However, these Six District Councils were outside the purview of the Sixth Schedule and not established under the provision of the Sixth Schedule. Compared to the other Autonomous District Councils established under the provision of Sixth Schedule, this Act, 1971 does not provide legislative and judicial powers to the Autonomous District Councils in Manipur. It only provides limited Administrative powers under the pervasive control of the State. Hence, the six ADCs in Manipur are only a statutory body created under the Act, 1971 but not a constitutional body as established under the Sixth Schedule. On January 18, 2013, members of the six ADCs in Manipur launched agitation by demanding autonomy, adequate devolution of powers and a separate budget to enable functioning effectively to satisfy the hill people. In the present days, the implementation of the Sixth Schedule in the hill areas is the demand of the tribal people in Manipur.⁸

Under the influence of Angami Zapu Phizo, a Naga leader and militant, and Naga National Council (NNC) demanded full independence. Hence, the District Council was not created in the Naga Hills District because the Nagas rejected the idea of the introduction of District Council instead of granting full independence. The Nagas boycotted the general elections to the

⁸A.P.K. Singh, *op.cit.*, p.83.

District Council and continued their struggle for a sovereign Nagaland. In fact, this movement inclined towards seeking secession from India through armed revolution. Till the present time, the State of Nagaland has no District Council other than Village Councils and Village Development Board.⁹

Demand for Autonomous District Council in Mizoram and Manipur

For a long time, the State of Mizoram has been facing Hmar and Reang problems. In fact, one of the biggest burning issues is still Reangs/Brus problem. Way back to 1997, the ethnic clash occurred between the Bru tribes and Mizo community after a State forest official was murdered by some Brus and the Mizo youth reacted sharply by burning some Bru villages and the opportunity came to put pressure on the Mizoram Government, the Bru underground outfit, BNLFF (Bru National Liberation Front) was quick to seize this opportunity by urging their fellow Brus to flee the State so that pressure might be put on the Mizoram government through the Centre. More than 30,000 Bru tribes fled to neighboring Tripura after this ethnic conflict and living in different relief camps. Their repatriation is not completed till today due to several problems. The main problem is that the Bru tribes have enhanced their demands to the Central and State Governments in all repatriation, and some of their demands are very sensitive and impossible to grant them which could spoil the unity of the State and that will surely produce more chaos in the State if granted. If we look back the history, the Bru National Union (BNU) held its first significant and

⁹ Ibid., p.83.

crucial conference at Saipuilui village on September 23 & 24, 1997, and this conference was attended by some 400 delegates of the Bru community including the delegates of the Bru community from the State of Tripura. The conference adopted a resolution demanding creation of separate Autonomous District Council for the Bru community within Mizoram and thus came as a very big surprise for the Mizo people particularly in the Western Belt of the State, Mamit District where Bru tribes mostly concentrated.

In 2016, the Mizoram Bru Displaced People's Forum had filed a writ petition in the Supreme Court of India asking that the Central Government should be directed to establish an Autonomous District Council for the Bru community under the 6th Schedule to the Constitution of India inside Mizoram. And the demand for an ADC for the Bru community was part of a long list of demands placed before the Apex Court in WPC (Civil) No. 867 of 2016. The MBDPF leader Bruno Visha said that it was mentioned that an Autonomous District Council is indeed part of the petition and it can be an alternative if their demands for allotment of 5 acres land, job reservations, compensation at par with displaced Kashmiri Pandits and establishment of settlements cannot be realized by the government. He also said that if their demands are given, then they would not need a District Council.¹⁰ If we carefully study the movement of the Brus from the beginning, the creation of a separate Autonomous District Council for the Brus community inside Mizoram on the lines of

¹⁰ "Bru leaders petition Supreme Court for Autonomous District Council", Frontier Despatch, (Mizoram's Little English Weekly published in Aizawl), DL06.12.2016.

CADC, MADC, LADC is not their main target and focus in the beginning of the movement. Rather, this has slowly been included in their demands as there is a provision under Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India.

The question of autonomy under the Sixth Schedule of the constitution of India has a long history in Mizoram. The Hmar People's Convention (Democratic) which is the Hmar militant group and popularly known as HPC (D) has been demanding an Autonomous District Council for the Hmar tribe inhabiting the north and north-eastern pockets of Mizoram.¹¹ As we know, there were repeated allegations of HPC (D) involvement in elections. Sometimes, on the eve of election, we used to hear some tragic news from the media about the undesirable activities of HPC (D) involving in the elections directly or indirectly and threatening of the voters. Due to this, elections of Village Councils could not be held in times in some areas where HPC (D) is active. In fact, the reason of these activities of HPC (D) is to urge the State Government demanding an Autonomous District Council for the Hmars under the provision of Sixth Schedule. There is the Sinlung Hills Autonomous District Council (SHADC) under the Chairman of Lalmalsawma Darngawn. Lalmuanpuia Punte, Vice Chairman of Hmar Welfare Committee (HWC) said that their (the Hmars) ultimate goal is to achieve Sinlung Hills Autonomous Council under the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India, not a mere Development Council.¹²

¹¹ Ibid.,

¹² A.P.K. Singh, op.cit. p.85.

Memorandum of Settlement between HPC (D) and Government of Mizoram

After a series of Peace Talks were held, the Mizoram State Government and Hmar people's Convention (Democratic) popularly known as HPC (D) signed a historic peace accord on April 2, 2018 to end the over two-decade-old insurgency and three-decade-old deadlock on the Iamar political imbroglio in Mizoram. In the presence of Government officials and HPC (D) leaders, the Memorandum of Settlement was signed on behalf of the State Government by Chief Secretary, Arvind Ray, while the HPC (D) was represented by its President H. Zosangbera. To reach an amicable solution, the Peace Talk between Mizoram Government and HPC (D) had begun in 2010. The real talks to reach an agreement between the two began in August, 2016 and ended with political level talks in March, 2018.¹⁵

The Mizoram State Legislative Assembly passed the Sirlung Hills Council (SHC) Bill on June 27, 2018. Formation of the proposed Sirlung Hills Council is the result of the Peace Accord signed between the State Government of Mizoram and the HPC (D) to replace the Sirlung Hills Development Council (SHDC), which came into existence in 1997 as a result of the Peace Accord between the Mizoram State Government and the erstwhile Hmar People's Convention (HPC) in July 1994. Mizoram Home Minister, R. Lalzirliana, who introduced the bill, said that the SHC would be accorded more autonomy than the earlier SHDC and the Council shall be within the framework of the constitution. The

¹⁵ Mizoram-HPCD truce inked", The Telegraph (National Daily published in English in Kolkata), D..03.04.2018.

Ethnic Groups and Demand of Autonomy in North East India

proposed SHC will have a General Council and an Executive Council. The General Council will consist of 14 members of which 12 will be directly elected and 2 will be nominated by the State Government in consultation with the SHC and the term of office will be 5 years. The Council will be headed by Chief Executive Member (CEM) and it will have Chairman and Dy. Chairman and four Executive Members (EM) to be nominated by the CEM. The Bill also envisages establishment of Council Headquarters at Sakawrdai village in Aizawl district or any place within the Council area. There shall be a Secretariat at the headquarters, which will be headed by a Secretary. The Council will have an executive power to prepare its own budget, to formulate plans, schemes, make bye-laws and rules and to impose, levy and collect taxes within the Council area. The Council election can be contested by anyone who attained 18 years and enrolled in Mizoram electoral roll.¹⁴

In the case of Manipur, the existing six Autonomous District Councils were constituted by the Manipur Government on February 14, 1972, under the provision of the Manipur (Hill Areas) District Council Act, 1971, passed by the Indian Parliament. Hence, these six ADCs are kept outside the Sixth Schedule and do not enjoy many powers and autonomy which are enjoyed by the ADCs under Sixth Schedule. Thus, the demand of the hills men is to extend the provision of Sixth Schedule to the existing six Autonomous District Councils like other ADCs in some other States of North East India.

¹⁴"Sinlung Hills Council dinna tur bill Assembly House ah pass a ni" (Mizoram Assembly House passes Sinlung Hills Council bill), Vanglaini (Local daily published in Mizo in Aizawl), Dt.28.06.2018.

Article 3 authorizes the Parliament to

- a) form a new state by separation of territory from any state or by uniting two or more states or parts of states or by uniting any territory to a part of any state;
- b) increase the area of any state;
- c) diminish the area of any state;
- d) alter the boundaries of any state, and
- e) alter the name of any state.

However, Article 3 lays down two conditions in this regard: one, a bill contemplating the above changes can be introduced in the Parliament only with the prior recommendation of the President; and two, before recommending the bill, the President has to refer the same to the State Legislature concerned for expressing its views within a specified period. Further, the power of Parliament to form new states includes the power to form a new state or union territory by uniting a part of any state or union territory.

The President (or Parliament) is not bound by the views of the State Legislature and may either accept or reject them, even if the views are received in time. Further, it is not necessary to make a fresh reference to the state legislature every time an amendment to the bill is moved and accepted in Parliament. In case of a union territory, no reference need be made to the concerned legislature to ascertain its views and the Parliament can itself take any action as it deems fit. Hence, it is clear that the Constitution authorizes the Parliament to form new states or alter the areas, boundaries or names of the existing states without their consent. In other words, the Parliament can redraw the political map of India according to its will and desire. Thus, the territorial integrity

or continued existence of any state is not guaranteed by the Constitution of India.¹⁵

Under Article 3 of the Constitution of India, the North East India was also divided into smaller political units after independence. The three States namely Mizoram, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh were carved out from the then undivided Assam State. At first, Meghalaya was separated from Assam as an Autonomous State within Assam State and which was inaugurated on April 2, 1970. After the North Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act, 1971 passed by the Parliament, the North Eastern region was reorganized. Under this Act, Meghalaya, Tripura and Manipur were elevated to full-fledged States while Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh were conferred to Union Territory status in 1972. Both Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram became States in 1987. Mizoram was granted statehood status after signing of the memorandum of Settlement between the Government of India and MNF led by Laldenga on June 30, 1986.

After reorganization of North East India, the re-organization of States did not satisfy all the people. The demands for the creation of new separate States is still vivid and going on in the North East region till today. In Assam, the State experienced democratic as well as armed movements demanding for the creation of new separate States. The Bodos are demanding for a separate State of their own and they are not happy and satisfied with the Bodoland Territorial Council, the Hills State Demand

¹⁵ Lakhsmikant, M.(2013). *Indian Polity*. New Delhi: Mc Graw Hill Education, p. 5.2.

Committee (IISDC) was formed on January 20, 2013 to create a separate Bodoland State in Assam. Moreover, the Karbis are also demanding complete separation from Assam under the Karbi Anglong N.C Hills Autonomous State Demand Committee (KANCHASDCOM). Like Bodo people, the people of Karbi are also not satisfied in their present status of Karbi Anglong Autonomous District Council. Since 1986, the people of Karbi Anglong demand to implement Article 244A for the creation of an Autonomous State within the State of Assam and calling the Centre in this regard.¹⁶ Even the Bodos organised hunger strike last year (2017) strongly urging the Centre and Assam State Government for the success of their demand. This hunger strike has been organized under the guidance of All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU), National Democratic Front of Bodoland (Progressive) and People Joint Action Committee for Bodoland Movement (PJACHM). These three organizations strongly pressurized the Centre and Assam State Government for settlement of their demand as soon as possible which is the creation of new separate State for Bodos within Assam. The president of ABSU, Pramod Bodo said that around 2000 people joined this hunger strike and they should not receive even medical treatment until their demand is granted. The hunger strike has been organized within Kokrajhar and Bodo Territorial Area Districts (BTAD).¹⁷

¹⁶ Karbi Anglong District, (<http://karbianglong.nic.in> accessed on 03/03/2017)

¹⁷ "Bodo ten Chawnghei kalpu' mek" (Hunger Strike is being organized by the Bodo), Vanglaini (Local daily published in Mizo in Aizawl), 01.15.03.2017.

In Meghalaya too, the demand for the formation of new separate States is still going on. The oldest regional party in the State, the Hill State People's Democratic Party (HSPDP) has been demanding to bifurcate the State into a Garo State and a Khasi-Jaintia State. The President of HSPDP, H.S. Lyngdoh submitted a Memorandum to the President of India for this purpose and he said that he would continue this demand till we achieved a separate State for the Khasi and Jaintia people. On the other hand, Garo hills State Movement Committee and the Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA) are also demanding the formation of a separate new State for the Garos or Garoland within Garo Hills area in the Southern Meghalaya.¹⁸

The demand of the formation of a new State is still going on even in the State of Manipur. Under Article 3 of the Constitution of India, there is a demand of a new separate homeland for the Kukis. The Kuki State Demand Committee (KSDC) reiterated their stand demanding a Kuki State and the Kuki people would never stop this demand under any circumstances till it is achieved. In this matter, the Kuki armed group has been demanding a separate Kuki Homeland. According to them, the Kukis were independent people and they had never been under any foreign regimes till the territory was given to other foreign rulers. Before the British came to the region, they remained under the administration of their chiefs without other's control. The first ever tripartite political dialogue was initiated on June 15, 2016, by the Central Government along with Government of Manipur and Kuki National Organization and United People's Front for political

¹⁸A.P.K. Singh, op.cit. p.86.

settlement within the framework of the Constitution of India. Even in the case of Mizoram, after the decision of the Central Government came for the formation of Telangana State from Andhra Pradesh, it was reported that the Maraland Democratic Front (MDF), which was formed in 1970, has demanded a separate State for the Maras. According to the MDF, the Sixth Schedule is unable to safeguard and promote the Mara tribe in Mizoram after remaining 61 years in the District Council due to the interference of the State Government. In the recent year, the MDF approached the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Union Home Minister Sushil Kumar Shinde to upgrade the Mara Autonomous District Council into the Union Territory status as their political right.²⁹

The indigenous tribal people have still continued demanding a separate State for them even in the State of Tripura. The indigenous tribal people constitute around 33% or one-third of the state's population in Tripura comprising 19 different tribes and groups. The demand area for the creation of a new state constitutes around two-third from the territory of the State covering geographically the hill areas inhabited by the indigenous tribal people. Despite a strong opposition from the major political parties in the State, upgradation of the existing Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) into a full-fledged State is being demanded by the Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT) which is a tribal-based party in Tripura.²²

²⁹ Ibid., pp.86-87.

²² Tripura Tribal AADC (<http://en.wikipedia.org/Tripura-Tribal...>, accessed on 09/03/2017).

In the case of Nagaland, the Eastern Nagaland People's Organization (ENPO) has been demanding the formation of a new separate state called as Frontier Nagaland State from the State of Nagaland. The various communities of Naga such as Chang, Konyak, Khemnungan, Phom, Sangtam and Yimchunger formed the organization of ENPO in December, 2010. Under the umbrella of ENPO, they organized rally in four districts demanding the formation of a separate Frontier Nagaland State within Nagaland State on January 7, 2011. The demand area of a new separate Frontier State has covered half of the territory of the State constituting nearly 9-lakhs around half of the State's population. The backwardness of the region is one of the main causes of the demand for a separate Frontier Nagaland State. These groups stated that the demand for a new separate State is a demand within the Constitution of India. Another problem is the demand for unification of Naga inhabited areas popularly known as Greater Nagalim by the NSCN (IM). If this demand has been accepted, it requires the merger of Naga inhabited territories in North East region affecting the three States namely Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur. And this has been strongly opposed by these affected States. Certainly, it will provoke more problems and chaos in the North East region if this demand has been granted.

If we carefully analyse the history of North East India, Union Territories, States and more District Councils were already created in the North East region after the independence of India. The formation of these separate administrative units and regions are no doubt necessary for carrying out a smooth administration as well as for safeguarding and promoting the tribal people and the indigenous inhabitants culturally, economically and politically.

However, on the other side, the creation of more District Councils, UTs and States have certainly encouraged other ethnic tribal groups or people in order to organize and carry out similar movements and agitations demanding the formation of separate District Councils, UTs and States under Sixth Schedule and Article 3 of the Constitution of India. Even in Mizoram, this movement is still valid in the case of Brus and Chakmas demanding Autonomous District Council and UT/Special Administration from Centre.

The past experiences tell us that some of the autonomy movements had been started in the beginning for some sort of autonomy for District Councils, Development Council or Territorial Council not for the movement for State or UT. However, with the passage of time, it was transformed into the movement for a larger demand like UT or full-fledged State. Ultimately, this led to the strong autonomy movement and some of the movements are backed by the armed insurgent groups. If the movement reached at this stage is very dangerous which could spoil the unity of the State and it is very difficult to handle for the administrators due to the involvement of politics in most of the cases. For instance, the Bodos in Assam demanded a separate Council for Bodo people in the beginning and their demand was responded and Bodoland Territorial Council had been created latter on. But now, the Bodos are not only happy with their Territorial Council and demanding the creation of a separate State for the Bodos in Assam.

Conclusively, there are two questions to deal the rising autonomy movements in several parts of North East India, What to do? And what not to do? There is no exaggeration to state that some of the autonomy movements have been started by the tribal

people not only for autonomy mindset but also for the poor performance and negligence of the State Government for development of the tribal region. This makes the tribal people think that Sixth Schedule and Article 3 as their last hope for upgrading themselves to a better status in development and protecting their culture and customs. Hence, there is a lesson to learn from the State Governments too. According to the present trend, it seems that the demand for autonomy will not end in the near future. In the present context, we have seen more autonomy movements demanding separate District Councils, UTs and States in various parts of the North East region. Hence, the Centre and State Governments have to consider carefully its solution. No doubt, it is time to explore new ideas and policy to minimize or solve this problem by carefully thinking the positive and negative sides of the provisions of the Constitution of India related to these autonomy movements. If a serious consideration is not given, the existing various autonomy movements would surely produce more troubles for the concerned States and which would spoil unity of the States in the present and future.

Indigenous People and Cultural Survival Policy in Tripura

Lincoln Reang

Introduction

Tripura is a land of cultural periphery. The socio-economic and political incorporation of indigenous groups by giving them significant levels of autonomy in determining public policy is an important part of the Indian government's minority policy in the Northeast and Tripura in particular. This aspect is the result of an enlightened policy. It emphasized the protection of indigenous peoples.

The tribal's are among the indigenous inhabitants of Tripura. However, the indigenous-non-indigenous distinction may not be as easy to sustain in distinguishing between ethnic groups. The tension between them is an important theme in the politics of the area. The issue has acquired political saliency largely due to extremely high influx of immigrants during the past century. Aggravating the problem of identity is the feeling of a cultural uprootedness. Ethnic self-consciousness and its consolidation and asserting along the lines of tribe, community or language groups have become increasingly manifest in the recent years in the entire Northeastern region. The context of smooth integration of tribals and non-tribals, of various language groups and religious communities appear to be fraught with many hurdles. The commotions that go with demand-making polities, including secessionist movements, have in the meantime, created unsettled

conditions. As identity identifies the individual characteristics in every society, there is a unique perception to be guided by the preposition to launch a new and better civilization. Therefore, identity influences the needs for survival in the society.

Identity Question in Tripura

Tripura with an area of 10,486 sq. km has always been a multi-ethnic state like most other Northeastern state of India. The total population of Tripura is 31,99,203 (2001 Census) i.e. 8.18% of the entire Northeastern states. There are 19 scheduled tribes in Tripura, namely the Tripura/Tripuri/Tippera, Riang/Reang (Bru), Jamatia, Noatia, Iushai, Uchoi, Mog, Kuki, Chakma, Khasi, Garo, Ialam, Bhutia, Bhil, Munda, Orang, Lepchas, Santial and Chaimal.

Linguistically, the tribals in Tripura speak Kokborok and Bengali. But there are different other languages spoken other than Kokborok and Bengali. Socio-economic and cultural complexities distinguish tribal groups in Tripura. The tribal communities have diverse subsistence patterns. Based on cultural identity, the tribal aspirations for their right in the matter of political and economic sphere were always high.

Tripura, an ancient kingdom ruled by 184 rulers merged with the Indian Union on 15th October 1949. The impact of India's partition and the communal riot that took place had a great impact on Tripura. It was exerted through the influx of refugees from erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) bordering Tripura. The influx continued even after 1971 (creation of Bangladesh), thereby out numbering the indigenous tribal population of the state. The demographic explosion ultimately reduced the tribals to minority position (50.9% in 1941, 36.85% in 1951, 31.33% in 1961, 28.95% in 1971, 28.45% in 1981, 30.95% in 1991 and 31.05% in 2001). This

demographic change caused fear-psychosis in tribal mind which ultimately gave birth to the question of identity crisis. It was estimated that 6,09,998 refugees officially settled in Tripura between 1947-1971.

Tripura was a Union Territory until 1st July' 1963 and attained the status of a full-fledged state only on the 21st January' 1972. After India's Independence the problem of refugees from East Pakistan had a great impact in the history of Tripura. The unabated process of immigration completely changed the demographic structure of Tripura. In fact, flow of illegal migration has seriously affected all aspects of life of the indigenous people of Tripura. This trend has totally endangered the tribal's identity and their existence which reflect the core issue behind ethnic tension and social unrest in Tripura. Mass migration from Bangladesh has resulted in widespread inequality and imbalances of the land holding which ultimately resulted in the growth of insurgency and militancy such as the Tripura National Volunteers (TNV), the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) and the All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF). Also, the growth of insurgency is based with an assertion of protecting cultural identity which may be on the verge of crisis due to subjugation of ones society by the neighbouring society. Thus, ethnic and social unrest is also centered on the issue of encroachment into their lands by the outsiders. The feeling of remaining backward combined with the fear-psychosis of being eliminated by other occupying their traditional habitats have led to clashes between communities.

Autonomy struggles increasingly generate a fair amount of violence. In Tripura, self-determination movements have turned into armed struggles, triggering spirals of increased violence. Recently, the indigenous tribes for an aspiration to self-

determination demanded for the right to establish a separate territorial state, or rather to obtain some form of autonomy within an existing state-structure.

Tripura Tribal Struggle for Self-Determination

As the Northeastern part of India presents a unique history of different ethnic group's co-existence, the ethno-communal scenario may get communalized in due course of time. Identity conflicts have given shape to struggle for self-determination. The loss of language adversely affects tribal culture and threatened their extinction. Language is often considered a symbol of identifying a particular group's consciousness, and a language conflict invariably leads to ugly conflicts between different ethnic groups. A weaker language tends to be unconsciously destroyed or be bilingual which ultimately will get lost in due time. Moreover Northeastern Region is mainly composed of diversified culture with different tribes concerned about their own distinct identity and autonomy. Identity conflicts are the most violent form of all conflicts as they actively seeks to identify their rights in terms of socio-cultural, economic or political assertion. The Indian Constitution devotes various articles for the redressal of grievances and upliftment of the underprivileged particularly with reference to the Scheduled Tribes. For instance, the Bru (Reang) demanded autonomy within Mizoram i.e., setting up of an Autonomous District Council (ADC) based on the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, in Bru (Reang)-dominated areas of Mizoram. In the constitution of India, the rights for the formation of Autonomous District Council (ADC) and Regional Council is permissible under the Sixth Schedule, Article 244(2) and 275(1) as is the case in the states of Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.

Self-determination movements have turned into armed struggles, triggering spirals of increased violence against the state. The discontent started erupting in various forms. *Sengrak* (clenched fist) was one such secret and militant tribal political movement formed in 1947 with an aim to oppose the influx of non-tribal refugees from erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). The movement gained momentum in 1967 under the leadership of Ananta Reang and with the help of some Chakmas and the backing of Mizo National Front (MNF). The movement gathered momentum at Kanchanpur in North Tripura where the Reang and the Chakma tribes were in majority. R.K. Debbarmann, a top-ranking officer of Tripura permitted a group of about one thousand Bengali refugees to settle at Kanchanpur. The Reangs and the Chakmas repeatedly requested their Member of Legislative Assembly Raj Prasad Choudry (Reang) to remove the refugees. As Raj Prasad Choudry (Reang) did nothing; Ananta Reang thus formed a secret militant tribal organization called *Sengrak*. This was soon outlawed but spawned the Pahari Union in 1951. Two other tribal bodies, the Adivasi Samiti under Chakma inspiration and the Tripuri Rajya Adivasi Sangh came in to being, and soon after, all three came together in 1954 to form the Adivasi Sansad.

Tribal youth organized themselves under the banner of the Communist Party of India to defend their rights over their ancestral land. However in the 1960s because of serious ideological differences, the tribal youths left the Communist Party and formed their own party, Upajati Yuba Samiti (Tribal Youth Party). Subsequently, Bijoy Kumar Hrangkhawl founded the Tripura National Volunteers (TNV) in 1978. Dhananjay Reang was its vice-President. Tripura National Volunteers (TNV) continued its

activities till the signing of a tripartite agreement on 12th August 1988, paving the way for the surrender of its cadres. Another outfit, All Tripura People's Liberation Organization (ATPLO) remained active in 1980-1983. The National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) was founded in March 1989 by certain disgruntled Tripura National Volunteers (TNV) cadres led by Dhananjay Reang. The formation of NLFT is usurped against state terrorism and for greater autonomy (self-autonomy). The NLFT, with its different leadership ideology has undergone several splits. A factional group of NLFT returned to the normal life through tripartite accord of Memorandum of settlement on 15th April 2004. However, the NLFT's dominant faction led by Biswanoluan Debbarna remains one of the two active outfits in Tripura. The other outfit in addition to the NLFT which has steadfastly refused to be drawn into any peace deal with the Government is the Ranjit Debbarna-led All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF), founded in July 1990. The ATTF had been demanding for deportation of all those refugees who have come to Tripura after 25th March 1971, restoration of alienated lands, introduction of inner-line permit, etc. The ATTF returned to the mainstream through execution of bi-partite VIOS on 6th September 1993. Apart from the above, there are a good number of smaller groups like Tripura Resurrection Army (TRA) founded in 1994 by Dhananjay Reang that surfaced between the decades from 1990 to 2000.

Even as insurgency raged in the state, new parties constructed around the identity politics came into being. Some of the major tribal organizations and pressure groups which serve as organizational vehicle for tribal consciousness are Tripura Jana Sikha Samiti (1945), Tripura Sangh (1946), Sengrak (1947), Tripura Garamukti Parishad (1948), Paharia Union (1951), Adivasi Samiti

(1952), Tripura Rajya Adivasi Sangh (1953), Adivasi Samsad (1954), East India Tribal Union (1956), Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti (1967), Nikhil Tripura Upajati Yuba Samiti (1968), Tripura Tribal Student's Federation (1968), Tripura National Volunteers (1978), Tribal People's Liberation Organisation (1981), Tripura Hills Peoples Party (1983), Tripura Tribal Socio-Cultural Development Organization (1989) and All Tripura Tribal Force (1991). In 1997, the Indigenous People's Front of Tripura was formed with the central agenda of turning the areas under the autonomous district council into a separate state.

The Tripura Tribal Area Autonomous District Council (TTAADC)

The Tripura Tribal Area Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) was created by an Act of Parliament in 1979 and brought under the seventh schedule of the Indian Constitution. Although the TTAADC enjoys powers similar to other district councils operating under the sixth schedule, unlike other Autonomous District Councils in Northeastern India, TTAADC is built on the acceptance of the tribal as a generic and composite entity - a council for 'Tribal Areas' - rather than focused on a single tribe.

The tribal communities of Tripura were given encouragement by the Maharaja of Tripura in 1941 to settle down from the habit of their traditional *Jhum* cultivation (Slash and Burn Method) and get accustomed to wet land (Plough) cultivation. The Maharaja also issued an order in 1950 that the tribals will not be allowed to donate, sell or mortgage their land without permission. This order was issued so as to safeguard the interest of the tribals and its lands from being illegally transferred. In the national conference that was convened in 1952 by Jawaharlal

Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India to discuss the problems relating to the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe of India, Sri Dasarath Deb, the then Member of Parliament represented Tripura and proposed for some reservation of land respectively for the tribals. Later, in 1960 the Dhebar Commission was appointed to look into the matter relating to the SC and ST problems. Thereafter, the Dhebar Commission submitted a note to Shri N.M.Patnaik, then Chief Commissioner of Tripura that some specific area should be declared as reserved for the tribals under Schedule V of the Indian constitution. Also according to Dhebar Commission before the introduction of this scheduled the Tribal Development Blocks may be set up in tribal compact areas as an experimental basis, and in case it failed to materialized any improvement among the tribals, then the Scheduled V may be implemented. Thereafter, under the Chairmanship of Shri K.Hanumanthaiya the Administrative Reforms Commission was set up and that Tribal Councils be set up along with delegations of administrative powers. The tribals in Tripura who once constituted the majority of the population were reduced to a minority position by the successive waves of immigration of non-tribals especially after India's Independence in 1947. The unabated process of immigration completely changed the demographic structure of Tripura. In fact, flow of illegal migration has seriously affected all aspects of life of the indigenous people of Tripura. This trend has totally endangered the tribal's identity and their existence that reflect the core issue behind ethnic tension and social unrest in Tripura. Thus, it was on this background that the Government of Tripura decided to set up Autonomous Council with internal autonomy in tribal compact areas.

The tribal leaders of the Northeast India after 1947 had demanded political autonomy and introduction of new administrative measures in order to enable the tribal people to run the administration of their respective tribal regions. They therefore, sought constitutional provisions to maintain the tribal customs, cultures, languages and to ensure their autonomy. The Tripura Tribal Area Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) was formed with the efforts from various sections of the tribes of Tripura to ensure socio-economic development of backward tribal communities.

Tripura, once a princely state was acceded to the Indian Union on 15th October 1949. The tribals who once formed the majority of the population till 1941 (50.09 %) but in 1950 (34.68 %) with the influx of refugees from Bangladesh were reduced to minority. The minority position also created fear-psychosis among the tribals which resulted in the demands for the formation of Autonomous District Council. The formation of Tripura Tribal Area Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) generated high expectations among the indigenous tribes of Tripura but it failed to render better living conditions to majority of the tribal communities. The tribal communities of Tripura were given encouragement by the Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya in 1941 to settle down from the habit of their traditional *jhum* cultivation (Slash and Burn Method) and get accustomed to wet land (plough) cultivation. The Maharaja also issued an order in 1950 that the tribals will not be allowed to donate, sell or mortgage their land without permission. This order was issued so as to safeguard the interest of the tribals and their lands from being illegally transferred.

The Tripura Tribal Area Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) Bill in terms of the Fifth Schedule to the Constitution was passed in the Tripura Legislative Assembly on 23rd March 1979 when the Central Government led by Morarji Desai did not approved the original plan of introducing of an Autonomous District Council under the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution. The Bill was assented by the President of India on 20th July 1979. The Tripura Tribal Area Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) under the Fifth Schedule came into being on 18th January 1982 with an opportunity to protect tribal rights to land, guaranteeing employment and ensuring the right against exploitation by non-tribal money-lenders.

The objective behind the formation TTAADC was to provide and empower the indigenous people with an internal autonomy. To promote and bring all- round socio-economic and to protect and preserve the tribal culture, customs and traditions.

By the 49th Constitutional Amendment in 1985, the TTAADC was brought under the sixth schedule of the Indian Constitution. The formation of TTAADC under the Sixth Schedule of the constitution of India is believed to have fulfilled the long cherished dream of the tribals of Tripura who have for long clamored for self-determination (autonomy) for their socio-economic upliftment. TTAADC is the only autonomous bodies in the entire Northeastern states where all the nineteen tribal communities of Tripura were accommodated in its administration. But, TTAADC hardly has been successful to make any headway in finding solutions to any basic problems of the tribals. There is no any unique method to implement any particular projects. It has to depend on the State Government for finances, project execution and its subsequent implementations. Also, the deficit in the

allocation of funds hampers the TTAADC from taking up any developmental projects. The mass rural tribal's thus become victims of structural stagnation and economic immobility.

Issues Confronting the Tribal Society

The economic insecurities and problems of the tribal people of Tripura largely emanated from the progressive alienation of their land and traditional forest rights. As the Bengali migrants practiced relatively advanced pattern of wet-rice cultivation, compared to the age-old *jhum* (shifting cultivation) of the tribal people, there was large-scale transfer of cultivable land of the tribal people to the settlers or refugees. Backwardness of Tripura arises, after the partition of India, primarily due to its remoteness and geographical isolation. The TTAADC also calls for more autonomy and is backed by most regional political parties. The National Conference of Tripura (NCT), a tribal-based party, has demanded application of Article 244A of the Indian Constitution for converting the TTAADC into a 'State within a State'. The Indigenous Nationalist party of Twipra (INPT) under the able leadership of Bijoy Kumar Hrangkhawl and Jagadish Debbarma has also made demands like: 50% reservation of seats for the Scheduled tribes in the Tripura Legislative Assembly, Introduction of inner-line permit to TTAADC areas, to introduce Kokborok in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution, etc.

After the merger of Tripura with the Indian Union in 1949, the cause of the tribal people was taken up by the Gana Mukti Parishad ('GMP' later on a mass organization of the Communist Party) which has a large following among them in their struggle for land, forest and other legitimate rights. The Tripura Rajya Upajati Gana Mukti Parishad on the 24th November, 2016 also charted out certain demands to the Ministry of Home Affairs,

Government of India. The demands were made for the sake of the overall development of the State including the TTAADC areas. Some of their demands include:

The Provisions of 6th Schedule of the Constitution of India is suitably amended in order to empower TTAADC to control and manage the land, including the forest, within its jurisdiction.

Devolution of fund, function and functionaries are evolved similar to the guidelines of 73rd Amendment of the Constitution.

TTAADC is included fundamentally for regular allotment of fund and special financial and technical assistances from the NITI Commission.

Kokborok, one of the official languages of the State is included in the 8th Schedule by amending the Constitution of India.

Minimum Support Price of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) is declared for the benefit of tribal and forest dwellers. TTAADC is funded with required amount of share capital and fund for capital expenditure to build a Co-operative Marketing chain for marketing and optimally utilize the MFPs and enhance the livelihood of the forest dwellers.

Allocate fund for economic rehabilitation to the forest dwellers, who got pattas under RoFR. The Act should be suitably amended in order to award pattas to the Traditional Forest Dwellers, who are permanently residing in the forest areas prior to 1971.

Recently, the Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT), a newly indigenous regional political party under the leadership of Budhu Debbarma, Aghore Debbarma, Mever Kumar Jamatia, Pravir Kr. Kalai and Uhananjoy Tripura started demanding 'Tipland', a separate state for the tribals by elevating the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC). The demand was made as per the provision of Article 2 and 3 of the

Indian Constitution. The TTAADC was created with three fourth geographical areas of the state and one third population mostly inhabited by tribals. The following are some of the grievances of the IPFT leading them to demand for a separate state of Tipraland from within the periphery of TTAADC:

The enormous influx of refugees from Bangladesh (erstwhile East Pakistan) since 1950 leading to population explosion and reducing the indigenous people to minority.

Alienation of tribal lands resulting in displacement of indigenous people from their ancestral homestead and cultivable land.

Social underdevelopment and educational backwardness leading to identity crisis.

Exploitation, oppression, suppression, atrocities and deprivation from basic minimum requirements.

Under representation of Schedule tribes in Tripura State Government Services.

Non-implementation of developmental scheme of TTAADC as per provision of 6th Schedule to the Constitution due to non-commitment of the State government.

Conclusion

The identity of a person reflects his socio-culture, values, customs and language in various ways. But various government or majority ethnic groups in a particular area relentlessly adopted wrong policies towards the minorities. Therefore, many disheartened tribes are looking out or grouping for their identity, socio-cultural and political rights. And, thus inter and intra-tribal conflicts starts, when they find the rivals ethnic groups guilty of weaning their fundamental rights. The continuous deprivation and discrimination of the minority ethnic groups

have now become psychologically alienated. Moreover, the complexity of the tribal society needs a proper guidance in terms of rights that should be provided by the government. The legitimate right of any ethnic groups in Northeastern parts of India need to adhere to the constant constitutional safeguards due to the diverseness of their culture. The need for such genuine rights occur because most of the future course of action is determined by the majority rule, and thereby a regular deprivation take place on the minority in most parts of the Northeastern parts of India. Our constitution provides different rights for the permanent safeguards for all the protection of the minority ethnic groups in terms of dignity.

Ethnicity has emerged as one of the most significant social issues. It touches upon the political, cultural and social sphere; an assessment is required in order to solve the precise impact of the social unrest prevailing in different parts of North-East India. Awareness for a united struggle to safeguard tribal interests from the economic exploitation that resulted from the national development program would build up an avenue that can enable tribal-people to sustain their right to self-determination. Central/ State Government developmental works should be able to meaningfully integrate commitment to economic progress along with the protection of tribal rights. Peace may be a difficult proposition to realize in a multi-dimensional ethnic conflict, because appeasement of one can lead to incitement to violence by another. Therefore, we must initiate an agreement that is capable of defusing potential and future conflicts that might lead to further social unrest. Such social issues can be resolved by dialectical approach, which in turn creates a congenial atmosphere for dialogue that will accommodate other's views.

Therefore, an appraisal is essential to find out the problems relating to different ethnic identities and a root cause for their social unrest. It is with regards to the questions of development programmes and schemes in backward tribal areas such exploitation and ethnic tension tends to occur. So, more effective and proper Policy Planning by the concerned Central and State Governments is required for the elimination of such ethnic conflict and tension in order to achieve results for a permanent peace in Tripura in particular and the entire North East India in general.

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A Comparative Study of Tribal and Non-Tribal on Ethnic Identity and Sex Role Stereotyping

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Introduction

Identity is defined as the characteristics of thinking, reflecting and self-perception that are held by people in society (Kidd, 2002). In psychology, identity is the qualities, beliefs, personality, looks and/or expressions that make a person (self-identity) or group (particular social category or social group). Ethnic identity is defined as the retention of features from an individual's culture of origin (Keefe & Padilla, 1987; Laroche et al., 1998). In fact, this retention of the culture of origin is expressed through attitudes, values, or behaviors (Masuda et al., 1970). This definition of ethnic identity broadens the restrictive sense that was given to the term by several studies that only focused on the ethnicity or the country of origin of an individual (Daghfous & d' Astous, 1991; Kim et al., 2004). Most researchers agree that ethnicity stems from the fact that certain individuals belong to or identify with certain ethnic groups (Phinney, 1990; Phinney & Ong, 2007). Phinney (1990) proposed that ethnic involvement – which encompasses language, friends networks, religious affiliation, participation in structured ethnic social groups (e.g., sports), political ideology, area of residence, and other miscellaneous activities (e.g., consumption of media, foods, and songs) – was the most widely used indicator of multi-group ethnic identity. Phinney & Alipuria (1990) found that ethnic minority students rated ethnicity as a

central identity concern, equal to religion and above politics. Aries & Moorehead (1989) found that among Black female adolescents, ethnicity was the domain most predictive of overall identity status and was regarded by participants as the area most important to self-definition. Research suggests that the stronger one's ethnic identity, the greater the contribution that identity makes to one's self-concept (Phinney, 1996).

Sex Role Stereotyping

Stereotypes have been defined as faulty overgeneralizations (Allport, 1954; Gardner, 1973); cognitive representations that are stored in and retrieved from memory (Dovidio et al., 1986; Taylor & Crocker, 1981); specific, concrete exemplars (Bodenhausen et al., 1995; Kahneman & Miller, 1986; Linville et al., 1989); and prototypes that are averaged representations of social groups (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Hamilton & Sherman, 1996; Hilton & von Hippel, 1996). Stereotypes can be positive (e.g., "African-Americans are rhythmic") or negative (e.g., "Women are irrational"). In social psychology, a stereotype is any thought widely adopted about specific types of individuals or certain ways of behaving intended to represent the entire group of those individuals or behaviors as a whole (Mac Garty et al., 2002). A gender role, also known as sex role is a social role encompassing a range of behaviors and attitudes that are generally considered acceptable, appropriate or desirable for people based on their actual or perceived sex or sexuality (Levesque, 2011). A gender-role stereotype is a schema in which stereotypical beliefs about the characteristics and responsibilities of each gender are applied to individuals. Gender-role stereotypes can consist of role behaviors (e.g., men are aggressive), physical features (e.g., women are thin and slight), or occupations (e.g., men are carpenters;

Helgeson, 2002). Gender-role stereotypes can also contain descriptive components, which describe actual differences between men and women, or prescriptive components, which describe how men and women “should” or “should not” be (Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Eagly, 1987; Terborg, 1977). Golombock & Fivush, (1994) indicates that children as young as eighteen months show preferences for gender stereotyped toys. By the age of two, they are aware of their own and others’ gender and between two and three years of age, they begin to identify specific traits and behaviors in gender stereotyped way.

Statement of the problem

Ethnicity denotes groups that share a common identity-based ancestry, language, or culture. It is often based on religion, beliefs, and customs as well as memories of migration or colonization (Cornell & Hartmann, 2007). Dandy et al., (2008) found that the minority group had shown significantly higher scores on ethnic identity than students who are members of the ethnic majority group. Phinney (1992) found that the association between ethnic identity and intergroup attitudes was stronger for ethnic minority students (i.e., Asian American and Latina/o American), than it was for ethnic majority students (i.e., European American). Sex role is a role encompassing a range of behaviours and attitudes that are generally considered acceptable, appropriate or desirable for people based on their actual or perceived sex or sexuality. A stereotype is a type of schema in which beliefs about the characteristics of a specific group are applied to an individual (Hilton & von Hippel, 1996). Harbold & James (1991) study found that Native American women did have the most negative attitudes about positions involving working with advanced technology of any category formed by the intersection of gender and ethnicity.

The purpose of the present study is to compare and find the differences between Tribal and Non-tribal on their ethnic identity and sex role stereotyping. The interest was if there indeed exist, in a diverse ethnic state like Tripura, any differences in ethnic identity as has been seen in many other researches. Moreover, we also wanted to explore sex role stereotyping that tends to differ according to society and ethnic groups and if such is the case in Tripura. Furthermore, the purpose of the study is to find out if there is any significant relationship between ethnic identity and sex role stereotyping among the sample. The findings are expected to contribute to a theoretical framework and an emerging understanding of the variables and the difference between the selected groups. The present study was designed with the following objectives.

Objectives

- ◆ To examine ethnic differences on ethnic identity among the samples.
- ◆ To examine ethnic differences on sex role stereotyping among the samples.
- ◆ To examine the relationship between the psychological variables among the samples.

Hypotheses

Based on the objectives, the following hypotheses were set forth for the present study:

- ◆ It is expected that there will be significant differences among the groups on ethnic identity.
- ◆ It is expected that there will be significant differences among the groups on sex role stereotyping.
- ◆ It is expected that there will be significant relationships between the psychological variables.

Methodology

Sample: A sample of 150 ethnic groups (70 Tribal and 80 Non-tribal) from Tripura was selected for the present study using purposive sampling technique. Their age ranges from 14-37 years.

Design of the study

The sample incorporates Tribal and Non-tribal residing within Tripura, 70 and 80 participants respectively under each of the main cell of the design, for the comparison of Tribal and Non-tribal on the psychological variables.

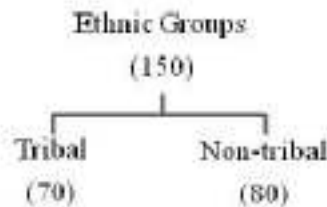


Figure: Design of the study

Psychological tools

1) Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM-R;Phinney & Ong, 2007): It is a six-item self-report tool of attitudinal and behavioral features of ethnic identity. Higher scores indicate higher levels of ethnic identity achievement. Response Format : 1 strongly disagrees, 2 disagree, 3 neutral, 4 agree, 5 strongly agree.

2) Sex Role Stereotyping Scale (SRS; Burt, 1980) : Sex Role Stereotyping is an 8 item scale with seven point response category ranging from strongly agrees (7) to strongly disagree (1). Higher scores indicate higher levels of sex role stereotyping.

Results

Descriptive statistics were computed including the mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis and reliability of the Scales in checking the normal distribution of scores and to decide

appropriate statistics on selected behavioral measures such as: i) Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure – Revised (Phinney & Ong, 2007) and ii) Sex Role Stereotyping Scale (Burt,1980).

Table 1: Mean, Standard Deviation, Skewness, Kurtosis, Reliability and Pearson Correlations for the whole sample

Ethnicity	Stats	Variables		Reliability		Variables	Skewness	SE	Kurtosis	SE
		Ethnic Identity	Sex Role Stereotyping	Variables	Alpha					
Tribal	Mean	19.20	37.30	Ethnic Identity	.737	Ethnic Identity	-.371	.198	.165	.198
	SD	2.574	7.387	Sex Role Stereotyping	.578	Sex Role Stereotyping	.011	.667	.011	.667
Non-tribal	Mean	18.44	31.84	Pearson Correlations						
	SD	3.010	8.882	Variables		Sex Role Stereotyping				
Total	Mean	18.79	34.39							
	SD	2.832	8.636	Ethnic Identity			.183*			

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 2: Levenes Test of Homogeneity of Variance for the whole sample

Variables	Sig.
Ethnic Identity	.210
Sex Role Stereotyping	.332

Table 3: One-Way Analysis of Variance for the whole sample

Variables	F	Sig.
Ethnic Identity	2.739	.100
Sex Role Stereotyping	16.491	.000

Descriptive analysis shows mean differences of the two groups (Tribal and Non-tribal) on the psychological variables. Tribal depict higher mean scores on Ethnic Identity (M=19.20) and Sex Role Stereotyping (M=37.30) whereas Non-tribal depict lower mean scores on Ethnic Identity (M=18.44) and Sex Role Stereotyping (M=31.84). The reliability coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) was computed on the behavioral measures. Results revealed substantial item-total coefficient of correlation for the scales and order of reliability coefficient of Cronbach's alpha was .757 for Ethnic Identity, and Cronbach's alpha was .578 for Sex Role Stereotyping. This shows the applicability of the scale to the present population. The Pearson Correlation table shows significant positive correlation between Ethnic Identity and Sex Role Stereotyping ($r = .183$; $p < .05$) indicating that when Ethnic Identity is high Sex Role Stereotyping is also high. Levene's Test shows insignificant results, therefore allowing us to proceed to the analysis of variance. One-way ANOVA tables show significant effects of the selected samples on Ethnic Identity and Sex Role Stereotyping. The result of One-Way ANOVA indicated significant effects of Tribal and Non-tribal on the psychological variable of Sex Role Stereotyping. The mean difference on Sex Role Stereotyping of the two groups (Tribal and Non-tribal) were found to be statistically significant ($F=16.491$, $p < .05$) and mean difference on ethnic identity indicated that there was no significant difference between the selected groups (Tribal and Non-tribal).

Conclusions

The above result showed ethnic differences on Ethnic Identity and Sex Role Stereotyping. We observed a significant relationship between the psychological variables, ethnic identity and sex role stereotyping which showed significant positive correlation, which means that when ethnic identity increases, sex role stereotyping will also increase or when ethnic identity decreases, sex role stereotyping will also decrease. There is a significant difference of the groups on sex role stereotyping while there is insignificant differences on ethnic identity. Findings have been supported by Phinney & Alipuria (1990), showing that ethnic identity were significantly different among minority group (Asian-American, Black, & Mexican-American) compared to majority group (White people). The findings of this research on sex role stereotyping have also been confirmed by existing literatures; Morris (2006) found that men were twice as likely as women career settings in popular interest magazines worldwide; women were portrayed in more ambiguous, domestic and decorative scenes.

Limitations

The present study has some limitations in the context that it was conducted only on adolescents and adults aged between 14 - 37 years, moreover, the sample was confined to participants residing only in Agartala. Socio-economic status and other demographic variables could have contributed to the response of the results but these factors have not been considered.

Suggestions for Further Research

A recommendation for future research would be to focus on other important psychological variables for example, ethnicity in terms of their perception, experiences, self-esteem or emphasis on education, social economic status and explore more in-depth

how this issue impacts not only adolescents and adults life but other age groups as well as his or her ethnic identity and sex role stereotyping development. Another recommendation would also be in terms of having a broader participant we should include those who resides in others within Tripura as well.

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Gender Role Attitudes : A Comparative Study among Tribal and Non-Tribal People Living in Agartala

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Introduction

Gender is the range of characteristics pertaining to, and differentiating between, masculinity and femininity. Depending on the context, these characteristics may include biological sex (i.e., the state of being male, female, or an intersex variation), sex-based social structures (i.e., gender roles), or gender identity (Udry, 1994; Haig, 2004). People who do not identify as men or women or with masculine or feminine gender pronouns are often grouped under the umbrella terms non-binary or genderqueer. Some cultures have specific gender roles that are distinct from “man” and “woman,” such as the hijras of South Asia. The process whereby people acquire the rules, beliefs, and attitudes appropriate to their particular gender is known as gender socialization (e.g., Muelenhard & Peterson 2011). Theories that are based on gender socialization, such as social learning theory and cognitive developmental theory, share a common assumption that behavior, roles, traits, and attitudes considered appropriate for a particular gender are learned through observation and training (Lippa 2002).

Gender Role

A gender role, also known as a sex role (Levesque, 2011) is a social role encompassing a range of behaviors and attitudes that are generally considered acceptable, appropriate, or desirable for

people based on their actual or perceived sex or sexuality (Alters & Schiff, 2009; Gochinan, 2013). Gender roles are usually centered on conceptions of femininity and masculinity although there are exceptions and variations. The specifics regarding these gendered expectations may vary substantially among cultures, while other characteristics may be common throughout a range of cultures. There is ongoing debate as to what extent gender roles and their variations are biologically determined, and to what extent they are socially constructed. Gender roles and expectations play a significant role in couple interaction, family decision-making, and perspectives on marital satisfaction.

Gender roles are typically determined by society (Williams & McLean, 2006). Sex roles thus reflect the interaction between biological heritage and the pressures of socialization, and individuals differ greatly in the extent to which they manifest typical sex-role behaviors (American Psychological Association, 2015).

Attitude towards Gender Roles

An individual's gender role attitude is their set of beliefs regarding the appropriate role for men and women in society (Bazik & Spring 2010, p: 3). Gender-role attitudes are one aspect of psychological change that might be observed in individuals as they become parents. Gender-role attitudes can be thought of on a continuum from traditional to egalitarian (nontraditional). Traditional gender-role attitudes focus on the interdependence of partners and the distinction in power between the husband's breadwinner role and the wife's homemaker and mother roles, whereas nontraditional gender-role attitudes allow for egalitarian power relations and less

gender-differentiated roles so that both partners can contribute equally both economically and in child-rearing (Rogers & Amato, 2000). Over the past few decades, gender-role attitudes for men and women have become less traditional (Rogers & Amato, 2000; Spain & Bianchi, 1996); and women's attitudes have changed more than men's, such that women hold more egalitarian attitudes (Twenge, 1997).

Research is revealing trends that Americans are moving away from patriarchal marriages. A study conducted in 2000 by Amato, Booth, Rogers and Stanley found that 61 percent husbands and 74 percent of wives reported that husbands sometimes had the final word, while 65 percent of husbands and 70 percent of wives reported that wives sometimes had the final word (Amato et al 2007). The Pew Research Center (2008) conducted a telephone survey to assess the decision-making process in American homes; 2250 adults were interviewed. Forty-three percent of all couples surveyed reported that the woman makes decisions in more areas than the man. By contrast, 26 percent of couples reported that men make more of the decisions. Joint decision making arrangements were reported by 31 percent of couples.

Researchers often define gender role attitudes within marriage in a variety of ways. For example, Amato and Booth (1995) define them based on an individual's acceptance of specialized roles for husbands and wives. Those who emphasize women serving as the homemaker and men serving as the breadwinner are said to have traditional gender role attitudes, whereas those with egalitarian attitudes emphasize shared roles between men and women. This is one of the most common conceptualizations, and many researchers use similar definitions

of gender role attitudes that emphasize attitudes toward shared versus specialized roles for males and females (Baker, Kiger, & Riley, 1996; Bertley, Barton, & Cilliard, 2005; Rogers & Amato, 2000). Meanwhile, others have used gender role attitudes to refer to sex-role traits such as dominance, aggression, submission, and dependence (Cobb et al., 2009). According to a study done by Bryant (2003), gender role traditionalism declined over four years in college. It was found that women held more egalitarian views than men did at the beginning of college and four years later, but that both male and female levels of traditionalism had declined over the four years. Egalitarianism increases were greatest among students who completed college rather than those who dropped out or did not attend college; and students who were more liberal than conservative in their political views tended to have more egalitarian attitudes. Going to college may provide women with the knowledge, support, and confidence to break gender norms. Classes such as women's studies, cultural anthropology, and psychology of women may enforce the ideas of egalitarianism and encourage women to be whom and what they want to be, despite gender norms.

Given to the theoretical and methodological foundation provided in this chapter and coupled with the previous chapter, the following objectives were framed for the present study.

OBJECTIVES

- ◆ To examine gender differences on attitude toward gender roles among the sample.
- ◆ To examine ethnic differences on attitude toward gender roles among the sample.
- ◆ To examine the independent and interaction effects of gender and ethnicity on attitude towards gender roles.

HYPOTHESES

Based on the objectives, the following hypotheses were made for the present study :

- ❖ It is expected that there will be gender differences on attitude toward gender roles.
- ❖ It is expected that there will be ethnic differences on attitude toward gender roles.
- ❖ It is expected that there will be significant independent and interaction effects of gender and ethnicity on attitude towards gender roles.

Methodology

❖ Sample

150 adolescents and young adults (72 males and 78 females) living in Agartala were selected using purposive sampling procedure. Their age ranges between 14-37 years.

❖ Design of the study

MANOVA 2X2 Factorial design - Gender (Males x Females) X Ethnicity (Tribal x Non- Tribal)

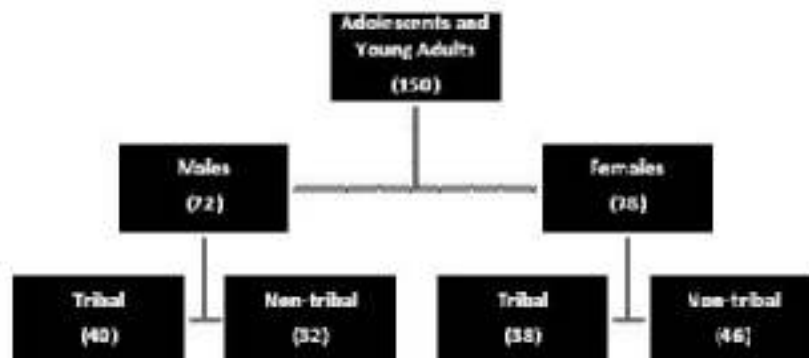


Figure: Design of the study

◆ **Psychological tool used**

1) *Gender Role Attitude Scale* (Rodriguez-Franco et al., 2010): The Gender Role Attitude scale assessment was a psychological tool which was used to measure attitudes toward gender roles. The questionnaire consists of 20 items with five sub-scales (Social Function Transcendent, Family Function Transcendent, Family Function Sexism, Social Function Sexism and Employment Function Sexism). The attitudes scale offers five answer options, graded using a likert scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is (Totally agree) and 5 is (Totally disagree).

Results and discussions

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for the scales and subscales of the behavioral measures Gender Role Attitude Scale (Social Function Transcendent, Family Function Transcendent, Family Function Sexism, Social Function Sexism, Employment Function Sexism) showing mean, Standard Deviation, Skewness and Kurtosis for the whole sample.

Gender	Ethnicity	Statistics	Family Function Transcendent	Social Function Transcendent	Family Function Sexism	Social Function Sexism	Employment Function Sexism
Male	Tribal	Mean	6.56	3.62	10.08	11.21	11.19
		SD	1.533	1.572	2.276	3.239	2.946
		Skewness	-.392	-.562	-.588	-.465	-.439
		Kurtosis	-.392	-.562	-.588	-.465	-.439
	Non-Tribal	Mean	8.63	5.65	10.66	13.66	15.19
		SD	3.077	2.304	3.065	2.743	3.822
		Skewness	.016	.063	-.420	.645	-.028
		Kurtosis	-.584	-1.042	-.673	-.107	-.394

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Gender	Ethnicity	Statistics	Family Function Transcendent	Social Function Transcendent	Family Function Sexism	Social Function Sexism	Employment Function Sexism
Female	Tribal	Mean	6.90	3.39	11.06	11.58	16.74
		SD	1.814	1.358	3.540	2.046	3.483
		Skewness	.0462	.852	.459	.113	.353
		Kurtosis	-.390	-.129	-.526	-.602	-.900
	Non-Tribal	Mean	8.79	4.31	12.87	12.81	19.29
		SD	2.798	1.776	3.071	2.507	3.494
		Skewness	-.172	.216	-.263	.256	.226
		Kurtosis	-1.033	-.585	-.321	.053	-.486

Table-2 : Cronbach Alpha Reliability for GRAS for the whole samples.

Reliability Statistics
Cronbach's Alpha
.520

Table-3 : Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances for GRAS for the whole samples.

Variable	Sig.
GRAS	.112

Table 4 : MANOVA for 2 x 2 factorial design for the whole samples

Variables	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Family Function Transcendent	8.789	.000	.153
Social Function Transcendent	10.477	.000	.177
Family Function Sexism	7.163	.000	.128
Social Function Sexism	4.931	.003	.092
Employment Function Sexism	16.579	.000	.254

Descriptive analysis shows mean differences of the four groups (tribal males and females and non - tribal males and female) on the psychological variables. Tribal males depict higher mean scores on Family Function Transcendent (M=6.56), Social Function Transcendent (M=3.72), Family Function Sexism (M=10.08), Employment Function Sexism (M=14.49) whereas Non- tribal male score higher on Social Function Sexism (M=10.66). The lower the scores indicates that they have high attitudes towards gender roles. The reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) was computed on all behavioral measures. Results revealed substantial item-total coefficient of correlation for the scales/sub-scales and order of reliability coefficient of Cronbach's alpha was .520 for the total score on Gender Role Attitude Scale. This shows the applicability of the scale to the present population. Levene's Test indicates insignificant results, therefore allowing us to proceed to the analysis of variance, this measure falls under normal skewness and kurtosis. The result of MANOVA indicated significant effects of gender on the subscales of Social Function Transcendent, Family Function Transcendent, Social Function Sexism and Employment Function Sexism. The results have shown that there is a significant independent and interaction effects of gender and ethnicity on attitude towards gender roles.

Conclusions

The above result therefore proves our hypotheses showing gender differences on Psychological variables i.e. Social Function Transcendent, Family Function Transcendent, Family Function Sexism, Social Function Sexism, Employment Function Sexism among Tribal and Non-tribal living in Agartala. From the above results we can see that Tribal male held higher attitude on traditional gender roles than females. Our finding was supported

by study done by Bryant (2003), gender role traditionalism declined over four years in college. It was found that women held more egalitarian views than men did at the beginning of college and four years later). Over the past few decades, gender-role attitudes for men and women have become less traditional (Rogers & Amato, 2000; Spain & Bianchi, 1996; Thornton, 1989); and women's attitudes have changed more than men's, such that women hold more egalitarian attitudes (Twenge, 1997).

Limitations: Although, it was designed to be the systematic and authentic research, the present study is not free from limitations. Possible limitation of the study is that the present study was conducted on adolescents and young adults aged between 14-37yrs, which may raise a number of methodological issues concerning the external validity of the findings for all age categories and all socio- economic status level.

Suggestions for further research: It would be worthwhile to test the present finding generalizing to different group of the same population and other population. Further extended studies by incorporating larger sample size and more repetitive measures of the psychological variables are desirable.

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Tribal Youths at an Urban Setting : A Sociological Analysis at Agartala City

Dr. Surojit Sen Gupta

Urbanization is the function of socio-economic changes that take place through time. The determinants of urbanization can broadly be categorized into three categories of economic, social and demographic determinants. The economically rooted determinants are the type of economy, the degree of commercialization of agriculture, the extent of diversification of economy, the changing size of agricultural landholdings, the stage of economic advancement and the degree of development of means of transportation and communication. The social factors that determine the nature and magnitude of urbanization are the degree of socio-economic awakening, the social value system, the stage of technological advancement, the public policies and the governmental decisions. Among the demographic factors, the rate of population growth, magnitude of migration and pressure of population are significant.

Since the economic base of urban places is very much different from that of the countryside, the economic factors gain prominence among the determinants of nature and magnitude of urbanization. No wonder, the agrarian societies with a high incidence of subsistence economy, small and dwindling agricultural landholdings, primitive agricultural technology and very little diversification of economy display very low degree of urbanization where the urban places are small-sized, widely

spaced administrative headquarters. On the contrary, the societies, which have an industrial base and where even the agricultural sector is highly mechanized, commercialized and scientifically rationalized, exhibit a high degree of urbanization with urban centres having a large size. Thus, the stage of economic advancement which is closely related with the stage of scientific and technological advancement is also a crucial determinant of degree of urbanization.

Development of means of transportation is also a vital factor in the urbanization. Much of the interaction envisaged in the processes of urbanization depends largely upon the degree of regional mobility. Even the processes of economic development are accelerated by the regional mobility. Generally, the incidence of regional mobility has a two way effect upon the process of urbanization. In the initial stages, the development of means of transportation and communication may break the rural isolation which may result into the increased urban concentration. At a later stage, the means of transportation and communication may help in accelerating commuting activity between cities and small towns as also between countryside and urban places. When the region gets highly urbanized, the means of transportation and communication may facilitate outward migration from large congested cities to the peripheral suburbs.

The degree of socio-economic awakening is the most important among these. This factor finds its expression through the desire for improving the living standards, the appreciation for the benefits of urban living, the changing value system and the breakup of the joint family system. The technological advancement works as a catalytic agent in this process of socio-

economic awakening. The process of urbanization is also influenced greatly by the government policies and decisions. The demographic factors like growth of population, the pressure of population upon agricultural resources and the migratory trends also play their role in determining the magnitude of urbanization. The five-staged model of urbanization process envisaged by Gibbs (1966) emphasizes the role of rate of natural increase and migration in determining the degree of urbanization. The regional differences in the rate of natural increase and the consequent migratory trends give a particular direction to the process of urbanization in any area. Above all, the role of increasing population upon the agricultural resource base in giving birth to urban settlement has been universally recognized. Thus, the nature and the magnitude of urbanization in any area are governed largely by the nature of its economy, social life and demographic character.

The changes occurring due to urbanization are not restricted to occupational and economic structures, but also have a considerable impact on the way of living, dress, manners, attitudes and values of the people. The Cultural dimension is covered under the concept of urbanism. There has been an increased tendency, among the Indian scholars to use this term as a synonym of 'urbanization', providing only a partial understanding of the phenomenon. Louis Wirth (1938) was probably the first to make a systematic and detailed analysis of 'urbanism' and 'urbanization' by considering the former as that complex of traits which makes up the characteristic mode of life in cities, and urbanization, as a process of development and extension of these factors. He explained the relationship between the two in the following way :

“Urbanization no longer denotes merely the process by which persons are attracted to a place called the city and incorporate into its system of life. It refers also to that cumulative accentuation of the characteristics distinctive of the mode of life which is associated with the growth of cities and finally to the changes in the direction of modes of life recognized as urban which are apparent among people, whenever they may be, who have come under the spell of the influences which the city exerts by virtue of the power of its institutions and personalities, operating through the means of communication and transportation (Wirth, 1938).

The degree of openness, which is direct outcome of the values of equality and rationality, can be measured through the changing basis of social networks in the city. The declining role of family, kinship and caste as the houses of social networks is also an indicator of the urban value system, based on a rational attitude, abandoning the superimposition of caste regulations. It also reflects an increased value for individuality, equality and secularism. The role of urbanization in transforming the basis of networks has been brilliantly brought out by K.N. Sharma (1975).

Who are Youth?

Youth is a much debated term and there is no wide agreement on its meaning. It is no use going into the various meaning attached to the term by psychologists, educationists and physiologists. The major emphasis in psychology seems to be on regarding youth as a category of biological age with its characteristic drives and tendencies. The fact of biological age is, however, not ignored in the sociological definition of youth, but here age is viewed as sociological rather than biological category. Understood as a sociological category, age is a period of transition

in the life of a man, transition from one stage of life to another. Specifically for sociologists youth stands for a collectivity belonging to a particular age group which marks the transition from childhood to adulthood. It is a period when one ceases to be a child but does not yet acquire the status of an adult. Hollingshead (1949) has remarked: "Sociologically adolescence is the period in the life of a person when the society in which he functions ceases to regard him (male or female) as a child and does not accord him full adult status, the role and functions. In terms of behavior, it is defined by the roles the person is expected to play, is allowed to play, is forced to play or prohibited from playing by virtue of his status in society. The U.N. definition of youth covers the age group 15-24 both inclusive. In Indian census the age group 15-29 is taken to comprise youth population.

In order to safeguard the basic buoyancy of youth it is necessary to find out from time to time what they are thinking. It is only by learning more about the current youth psychology that the guardians of society can discharge their true obligations to the rising generation. Social surveys conducted into the affairs of youth have revealed their interesting notions and views about political, economic and social matters. Some of these show the contamination of their sources, the cynicism and skepticism which are rampant in the life outside. But the great majority of youth has been found to be of one mind in their total rejection of the many evils that surround us today.

The Different Phases of Youth

From the sociological point of view, it is considered to be a unified and separately identifiable segment of life in so far as, in it the process of integrating into the essential membership roles of society starts and runs its course to the end. From this point of

view, the youth phase has the function of further developing and expanding the elementary social skills and capabilities, acquired in childhood to the extent that the complex degrees of competence necessary to achieve adult status are adapted and acquired in the fields of school and vocation, interacting partnership, politics and ethics, culture and use of consumer goods.

In respect of access to position and privilege, the youth phase represents an age-group which, as compared with adulthood, is discriminated against and, as far as whole course of life is concerned, represents an underprivileged sector of it. The justification for this discrimination lies according to the predominant social definition, in the fact that young people have first to acquire skill and degrees to competence which is prerequisite if adult status is to be competently maintained. Youth is characterized by the step-by-step acquisition of rights in various areas of behavior and the expectations, demands and duties connected with these rights.

The youth phase is a sector of life characterized by juxtaposition of two kinds of action demands; the dependent one related to childhood and the independent one related to adulthood. The transition from the youth phase is achieved only when, in all the relevant spheres of action, a complete or at least, an extensive degree of autonomy and personal responsibility in action is attained. As a rule, the decisive step towards adult status is taken only when, in the public sphere, the scholastic and the subsequent vocational training relationship are left behind and the young people proceed to the vocational and gainful sector; and again the 'private' sphere, only when the parent home is left and the foundation of firm partnership and a family has ensued. In the youth phase the decisive pre-programming of the reproduction

of the social and economic structures of society is done immediately, after taking up a vocation, marriage or the establishment of a firm partnership can be seen as the second dominant event which noticeably marks the transition from youth to adulthood.

In the demarcation between children and adult, young people are those who with puberty have reached biological sexual maturity without having achieved by marriage and vocation the general rights and duties which enable and compel them to participate responsibly in the essential basic processes of the society. Youth must also be analyzed as a socially produced phenomenon, the outlines of which are determined by social pre-conceptions. Correspondingly, the end of the youth phase cannot be tied to a definite age/date and does not necessarily occur in a closed sequence.

Youth is a phase in life with its own quality of experience; at the same time it is a 'product' of society and its culture which can be determined by reason of its characteristic place value in human-life and its specific importance in the reproduction of society. Friebel (1983) aptly expresses this fact when he calls youth a phase of life necessary for personal development and social placement, made possible by social measures and necessitated by the structural problems of society.

The youth phase is to be regarded as neither a mere prolongation of the childhood phase, nor as a characteristic situation of transition to the adult phase. Undoubtedly, the basic patterns of personality are formed in childhood but, because of the radical changes, in the characteristics of the youth phase, there arises a different situation which considerably alters the previous patterns because they are fitted into a total structure which is

qualitatively different. Undoubtedly, too, youth is characterized by having to acquire the capacities and skills which are typical and obviously necessary for the adult status which is to follow, but, because youth has to undergo its own processes of adapting and argument there can be no mechanical reproduction of social personalities from one generation to another.

Objectives of the Study

The impact of urbanization on the youth today cannot be denied. Youth is the period of life which is considered as crucial and significant period of an individual's life. Youth is the period of rapid changes in the individual's physical, mental, moral, emotional, social and sexual aspects. In the present day scenario the process of globalization has been influencing in the urbanization process which has an impact on the tribal youths of today.

Keeping the above conditions in mind, an attempt has been made to study the impact of urbanization on the tribal youths of today in the city of Agartala, with the following objectives.

1. To examine the attitude of the youths in various societal issues.
2. To study the recreational facilities among the youths.
3. To investigate the impact of urbanization and the life style of the youths.

The data for the present study have been collected with the help of random sampling method from 87 tribal youths from the city of Agartala. Questionnaires were circulated to more than 100 youths, but those that returned the duly filled in questionnaires were only 87.

Result and Discussion

The form of human life is determined by the environment where he lives. In relation to the environment, age has played a

very vital role for the development of personality. An individual acquires experiences through the ages.

Out of the total 87 respondents, the majority of the respondents 49, that is 56.32 percent falls in the age group between 21-23, 26 respondents, that is 29.88 percent fall in the age group 18-20. Whereas 12 respondents, that is 13.79 percent fall in the age group 24-26. Therefore, on the basis of the data it can be seen that majority of the tribal youths come from the age group between 21-23.

Regarding the sex composition of the respondents, out of the total 87 respondents, 51 that is 58.62 percent are males and 36 that is, 41.37 percent are females. About the marital status of the respondents it is reported that all the respondents were unmarried.

The religious background of the respondents, shows that majority of the youths are Christians that is, 64.36 percent and remaining of them where Hindus.

In response to the information about whether their place of birth was rural or urban, it is seen that majority of them were born in urban areas which accounts for 89.65 percent and the rest 10.34 percent of them were born in rural areas.

The ethnic composition of the youths under study is that, a considerable number of them were Tripuris 37.93 percent. Next to them were the Jamatias 16.09 percent, which is followed by 11.49 percent of Reangs and 10.34 percent of Molsoms. Among the others which constituted less than 10 percent includes, Uchois 9.19 percent, Mogs 6.89 percent, Hrangkhawls 5.74 percent and Garos 2.29 percent.

As regard the family background of the respondents, it was found that 87.35 percent comes from the nuclear family

background and only 12.64 percent come from the joint family system.

The educational status of the tribal youths under study reveals that all of them are pursuing their studies in the colleges situated in the Agartala city. Regarding their stream of studies in the college, it is found that, majority of the respondents that is 59.77 percent were from Arts stream, 31.03 percent of the respondents were from science stream and 9.19 percent were from commerce stream.

Further it was enquired from the respondents about their class of study in the college at the Three Year Degree Course, and to this, 42.52 percent of the respondents were from Second year, which is followed by 36.78 percent of the respondents from First year, And another 20.68 percent of the respondents were from Third year.

With a view to understand the leisure time activities of the respondents, we enquired as to how they spent their leisure time. To this, it was found that, 44.82 percent of the respondents spend their leisure time in internet surfing, 17.24 percent preferred watching Television, which is followed by Games and Sports 12.61 percent. Going to Cinema and Theater accounted for 14.94 percent and another 10.34 percent of the tribal youths revealed that they spend their leisure hour by attending Clubs.

To understand the social circle of our respondents with people they most often met, it was found that 43.67 percent of the respondents meet their friends, 31.03 percent have reported that they meet their peer groups. Meeting the members of their own community and neighbors accounted for 13.79 percent and 11.49 percent. Thus, the youths under study meet limited groups of people in a closed circle.

It was interesting to know from the tribal youths about their habit of prayers at home. To this, it was found that 67.81 percent of the respondents do not have the regular habit of praying and only 32.18 percent prays regularly. Similarly, it was interesting to know about their visit to the religious places. The answer to this by the respondents is that, 56.32 percent visit occasionally. 29.88 percent reported that they visit regularly and 13.79 percent said that they do not visit at all in the religious places.

An enquiry was made to know from the respondents about their food habit, because food plays an important role in the individual's life. Thus, we enquired from our respondents about their choice of food habit. The responses received for this, is that, 55.17 percent of the tribal youths prefer modern food items such as, Pizza, Burger, Momo, Hot Dogs etc. 29.88 percent of the respondents said that, they prefer both traditional and modern food items. And only 14.94 percent have reported that they prefer only traditional food items.

Enquiring further from the respondents about their opinion on Dresses they prefer to wear, it was found that, 33.33 percent of respondents prefer to wear the latest up to date fashionable dresses, which is followed by formal dresses 28.73 percent. The respondents who prefer causal dresses accounted for 21.83 percent. And only 14 respondents out of 87, that is, 16.09 percent prefer the traditional costumes.

It was interesting to know from the respondents, whether they possess mobile phone or not. The answer in returns was that, 100 percent of the respondents reported that they possess mobile phones. Further, it was asked whether they have 3G and 4G connection in their mobiles. To this, 49.42 percent have said yes, that they have this facility in their mobile phone. Then again 79.31

percent of the respondents have reported that they even have internet facility in their mobile phones.

Our curiosity was also to know from the respondents about their usages of modern gadget. Our query to this shows that, 32.18 percent of the respondents have got Bikes, followed by 25.28 percent of the respondents with Laptops, 20.68 percent and 16.09 percent of the respondents reported that, they have in possession the Ipod and Tablet. And only 5 respondents out of 87, that is, 5.74 percent constitutes for other things like Hair drier, Digital Camera, Video Games etc.

We were also interested to know from our respondents about their attitudes towards helping their parents in the family. The responses received were that, 44.82 percent of the youths replied that they help sometime or occasionally. Respondents who always help accounted for 36.78 percent. And another 18.39 percent of the respondents have revealed that they do not help at all, as there is no need and they are engrossed with other things. We further enquired from the respondents, the extent of their service at the community level. Out of total 87 respondents, 3.78 percent said that sometimes they extend their service, 21.13 percent of respondents always extent their service for the community. Respondents who not at all come forward for the community service accounted for 20.68 percent. Depending on the mood was another response by 18.39 percent of the respondents.

Regarding the involvement of the tribal youths in social function, the majority have reported for the Birthday Party which accounted for 48.77 percent. This was followed by 22.98 percent of the respondents for visiting any types of Fairs like Trade Fare, Industrial Fair, and Book Fair etc. Attending any cultural events like Musical Show, Rock Concert etc. was responded by 17.24

percent. And 11.49 percent of the respondents has accounted for Picnic, Outing etc.

It was interesting to know from our respondents about their educational aspirations after they complete their Graduation. For this, 36.78 percent of the respondents have reported that, they would pursue professional education like M.B.A, Journalism, B.Ed.; LL.B etc. 19.54 percent of the youths would like to study up to the Post Graduation Level. This was followed by 16.09 percent of the respondents who would like to continue their education beyond Post Graduation with Research Degree in the University. Respondents who do not want to continue their studies after Graduation accounted for 27.58 percent.

Regarding the job aspiration or what they want to choose as their carrier, it was found that, 34.48 percent of the respondents would like to join in the Corporate Sector. 21.83 percent would prefer to join the Government Services. Teaching as a carrier was accounted by 16.09 percent of the respondents, which is followed by Business 13.79 percent of the respondents. The other responses were joining N.G.O's 8.04 percent and joining Army/Defense by 5.74 percent.

An enquiry made from the respondents regarding their attitude towards marriage. To this, 78.16 percent of the respondents reported that they prefer love marriage and only 21.83 percent reported for arranged marriage.

We also tried to find out from our respondents that, would they like to make new friends. In response to this, 100 percent of the respondents are of the view to make new friends, as friendship broaden one's mind and breaks all the barriers. Further an enquiry was made from the respondents about their visit to Restaurants. To this also, 100 percent of the respondents have replied that they

visit Restaurants regularly for tasting the different food items and also it is good for them to discuss on various things/ issues among the friends in the Restaurants.

The entertainment and relaxation are essential to life. The means of entertainment keeps changing with time and circumstances. In Agartala city there has been significant change in means of entertainment as a result of urbanization. By keeping this view, we enquired from the respondents who are the tribal youths about their entertainment. In reply to this query, it was found that 41.37 percent of the respondents prefer entertainment in the family. Respondents who preferred professional entertainment accounted for 33.33 percent. And another 25.28 percent of respondents said that they prefer entertainment outside the family.

Inquiring about the health consciousness of the respondents, it was found that 90.80 percent of the respondents are consciousness about their health and only 9.19 percent of the respondents have reported that they are not conscious about their health. Moving further it was found out that, 86.20 percent of the respondents even visit Ladies and Men's Parlor on regular intervals for keeping themselves fit.

Advertisements are important today, as indicators of social and economic progress. The ever expanding markets for goods and their unchallenged assault through advertisements are flooding the society with information and ideas, attitudes and imagery which is difficult to control and assimilate. This is affecting the young minds to a great extent. Youth's are fascinated by advertisements. They react to these glamorous advertisements. Now a days Television advertising had entered into daily life of the youths.

Thus, we were interested to know from our respondents whether they are inflicted with the advertisements which are shown in the Television. The response to this was that 86.20 percent of the respondents admitted that they are inflicted by advertisements like Bikes, Mobile Phones, Cosmetics, Dress Materials, Soft Drinks, and Chocolates etc. which are shown in the Television. Whereas 13.79 percent of the respondents have responded that they are not inflicted by any advertisements.

To conclude, the study shows that urbanization changes the attitudes, beliefs, values and the behavior pattern of the tribal youths in Agartala city, which in turn changes the life style of the tribal youths. The impact of urbanization of the life of tribal youths has been observed in many aspects such as education, recreation, behavior pattern, attitudes etc. It was also observed that urbanization in Agartala has been creating an atmosphere which influences the psychology of the tribal youths and also their behavior pattern.

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Tribal Youth, Public Sphere and Higher Education in Tripura

Rajeev Dubey

This paper deals with the crisis of higher education in general and Tripura in particular. It seeks to raise the debate from mere economic analysis of the crisis ailing the higher education to the socio-cultural aspects of the crisis. Institutions of higher education are ideally poised to nurture public sphere in the educational space. Public sphere is discursive and liberal realm in which diverse views are contested and public opinion is formed, in this dialogic space open conversation is promoted and rational critical discourse is encouraged. In this space participants are treated equally irrespective of the caste, tribe or religion. In a democratic society, taking cognizance of and being sensitive to such public opinion is *sine qua non* for guiding the state's decision making and policies.

Through public sphere, society and the state come into contact. In the third world democratic nation like India where there are miniscule politically aware 'public' the importance of HEIs as 'public' good and as nursery of public sphere acquires further importance. Therefore, it is very important that in these democratic public spheres diverse section of society gets equal chance to voice their interest and views. Our constitution makers realized that the marginalized group of society needs to be adequately represented in HEIs, as this representation beside other benefits would also provide them

a platform to air their views, opinion and interest in the discourses taking place in public sphere which play a pivotal role in shaping the contours of public policy. No other case can be as illustrative of the need of adequate representation of marginalized groups in the public sphere shaping the policy contours as the case of Tripura.

In Tripura there are 19 major tribes and are considered to be the original inhabitant of this state. Chronicles of Tripura reveal that historically before the merger of Tripura with the Union of India it was ruled by the tribal kings and tribal were in majority. Subsequently after the merger with the Indian union the demography of Tripura has changed significantly. Tribals from being a majority have been reduced to minority (Bhattacharyya 1988) and constitute 31.8% of total population of Tripura as per 2011 census. Given this geo-political scenario and the changing demography, it becomes all the more important that the voice of tribal youth be heard in the discourses in public sphere of HEIs which eventually goes into policy formulation at the provincial and national level.

Public sphere in the work of Jürgen Habermas has been conceived as –‘a social space for the rational-critical debate about public issues conducted by private persons willing to let arguments and not statuses determine decisions’ (Calhoun 1992: 1). So for weaving the arguments in this paper, public sphere’s central category – ‘rational-critical discourse’ and as a ‘space of reasoned debate’ is taken. Conceived in this sense, public sphere acquires immense importance in lending voice to all sections of society. Viewed from this vantage point, HEIs stands closest to the spirit of public sphere and they are ideally poised to nurture and sustain the public sphere.

Education is essentially conceived as 'public' in nature given everyone's stake in it. Academic values and culture are umbilically connected to the society and are reflective of social structure and contradictions of society in which they are located. As our society is marked by social closure on the lines of caste, ethnicity, gender etc so are the practices in HEIs mediated by the process of social closure which limits the participation of people from marginalized section of society. Social closure provides a conceptual tool and 'a general model for the analysis of all forms of domination' (Murphy 1988: 48). Murphy conceives of social closure as 'process of subordination whereby one group monopolizes advantages by closing off opportunities to another group of outsiders beneath it which it defines as inferior and ineligible' (ibid.: 8). Studies have revealed how institutions of higher education are internally structured and subdivided by processes of social closure on the basis of caste (Kirpal et al. 1985, Wankhede 2013), class (Apple 1982, Nambissan 2010) and gender (Bhog 2002 ,Chanana 2003 , Manjrekar 2013) & tribes (Kumar 1986, Nambissan 2010 , Xaxa 2008).

This paper attempts to provide a critical and reflexive glance at the participation of tribal youth in current mainstream higher educational institutions (HEIs) in general and Tripura in particular. In this paper beside Introduction which establishes the linkage between public sphere, tribal youth and higher education, is structured in two sections and endeavors to address following issues- Section-I, deals with- *Limited participation of Scheduled Tribes: A Case of Shrinking Public Sphere in HEIs*, in this section through facts, researcher seeks to establish that the representation and participation of tribal youth is far from the constitutional mandate. This lack of representation of tribal youth

significantly undermines their participation in public sphere of HEIs which plays an important role in shaping the contours of public policy.

In section-II- *Curriculum, Pedagogy & the culture of social closure in HEIs*, reflects on the practice of curriculum and pedagogy in institutions of higher education, research tend to reflect on the culture prevalent in institutions of higher education which further undermines the participation of limited tribal youths in the institutions of higher education. The culture of silence promoted through multifarious means prevents tribal youth in articulating and expressing their voices in the public sphere.

Section-I

Limited participation of Scheduled Tribes: A Case of Shrinking Public Sphere in HEIs

This section seeks to establish through facts that the representation and participation of tribal youth is far from the constitutional mandate. This lack of representation of tribal youth significantly undermines their participation in public sphere of HEIs. Lack of participation of tribal youth undermines their role in shaping the contours of public policy.

According to the Census 2011 data, Scheduled Tribes (STs) constitute 8.6 % (104,281,034) of the total population (1,210,193,422) of India. In Tripura the situation is different; tribal (STs) constitute 31.8 % (1,166,813) of the total population (3,673,917) of Tripura. Further, it is important to look into STs population in the age group of (18-23 Years), which is the age group to enter higher education.

Tribal Youth, Public Sphere and Higher Education in Tripura

All India/ State	Total Population	ST Population	Percentage of ST
All India	140801526	11926495	8.47 %
Tripura	444191	144713	32.57 %

(AISHE 2013-14: T-120)

According to the all India survey of higher education (AISHE 2013-14), Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the age group of 18-23 years constitute 8.47 % (11,926,495) of the total 18-23 years age group population (1,40,801,526) of India. In Tripura tribal (STs) in the age group of 18-23 years constitute 32.57 % (1,44,713) out of the total 18-23 years age group population (4,441,91) of Tripura. Ideally Constitution of India mandates adequate representation of STs in proportion to their population in higher educational institutions. But in reality there is a yawning gap between what the constitution promises and mandates and what is actually delivered. The situation is glaring when we look at the enrolment of tribal youths in various Universities.

Category-wise Enrolment in various types of Universities

Type of University	Total Students	ST Students	Percentage of ST
Central University	655717	25885	3.9 %
Institute of National Importance	150849	9316	6.1 %
State Public University	2688340	76364	2.8 %

(AISHE 2013-2014: T-85)

In academia there is an illusion that Central Universities and institutes of national importance governed by the central government are prompt in implementing the constitutional mandate of providing adequate representation to the ST category. It is generally believed that state governed public institutions are underrepresented because of maladministration. But a quick glance at the representation of STs in these institutions would reveal the yawning gap between the policy and the practice of affirmative action. In the Central Universities the STs constitutes merely 3.9% of total students enrolled. In the institutes of national importance governed by the central government the STs constitute 6.1 % of total students enrolled and in the state public University the enrolment of STs is abysmally low at 2.8%. In all these scenarios the enrolment of STs is much below the constitutional mandate of 8% enrolment of STs. One needs to keep in mind that the required share of STs is expected to be much more than 8% in case of Northeastern state where the STs are in larger number. Since higher educational institutions are the spaces where policies are discussed, feedback articulated and newer policy framework proposed, the overall implication of underrepresentation of STs in the public sphere of higher educational institutions is that STs interest are not adequately represented in the policy formulation which is *vide quo non* in a democratic society. When the existential and experiential aspects of STs are not adequately represented in the policy framework discontentment brews, such discontentment offers challenge to democratic fabric of society in form of separatism, insurgency and other modes of protest and violence.

Enrolment in Higher Education- Social Category -wise Distribution

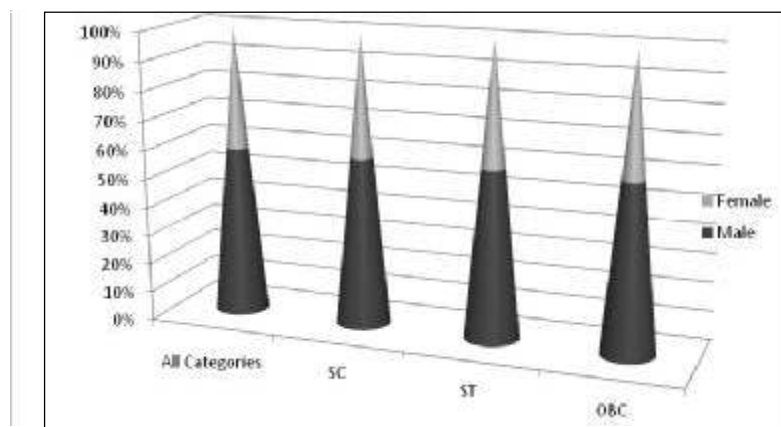


Figure 10 : Social Categories and Gender Distribution in Student Enrolment

ST Constitute only 4.6% of the total student enrolment (AISHE 2013-14:18)

The aforesaid figures reveal that though the STs comprise (STs) in the age group of 18-23 years constitutes 8.47 % of total population of India their representation is hardly 4.6% of the total student enrolled in higher education. This representation is further low for ST students facing multiple challenges- ethnic and physically challenged.

Representation of PWD students

Category per hundred	% out of Total PWD Male	% out of Total PWD Female	% out of Total PWD
SC	8.6	9.2	8.8
ST	2.6	2.4	2.5
OBC	28.8	30.4	29.4

Category wise Distribution of PWD students (AISHE 2013-14: 19)

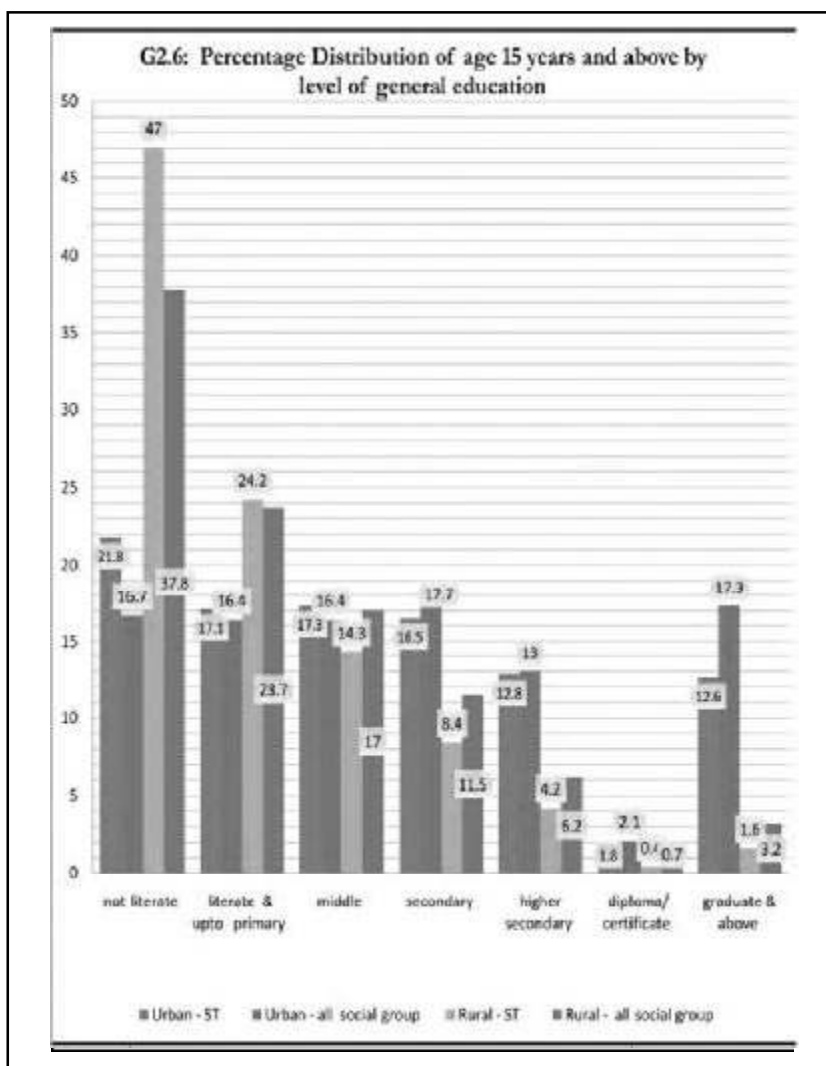
It is amply revealed that the representation of STs in higher education is much less than the constitutional mandate. The conditions of persons with disability in ST category facing multiple deprivations is even worse, according to the all India survey of higher education (AISHE 2013-14), they constitute merely 2.5% of the overall population in 18-23 years age group of PWD category. The representation of tribal youth in HEIs is much below their numerical strength in the state.

Enrolment in Higher Education: The Case of Tripura

State	Total Enrolment	ST Enrolment	Percentage of ST
Tripura	68262	12048	17.6 %

AISHE (2013-2014: T-49)

This paper is concerned with the representation of tribal youth in the public sphere of higher educational institutions in Tripura. The following table reveals the representation of STs in the higher educational institutions of Tripura. The tribals (STs) constitute 31.8 % (1,166,813) of the total population (3,673,917) of Tripura. The STs population in the age group of (18-23 Years) is 32.57% in Tripura. But if we look at the enrolment of tribals in various higher educational institutions in Tripura the condition is dismal and far from the constitutional mandate. Tribals despite being 31.8% constitute merely 17.6% of the total enrolment of students in higher educational institutions in Tripura. This underrepresentation seriously undermines STs voice in the articulation of their interest in public sphere of higher educational institutions. Such underrepresentation of STs is conspicuous in various programmes across the discipline.



Statistical Profile of Scheduled Tribes in India
 Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Statistics Division,
 Government of India 2013: 23

The statistical profile of STs reveal that hardly 1.6% of STs in rural areas are graduate and above. Further, only 0.4% of STs in rural areas are diploma holders. These statistics reveal that with the multiplication of regional deprivation with STs the representation of STs in higher education further drops to a newer low. The situation of representation of tribal youth is further clear when we look at their enrolment in various programmes.

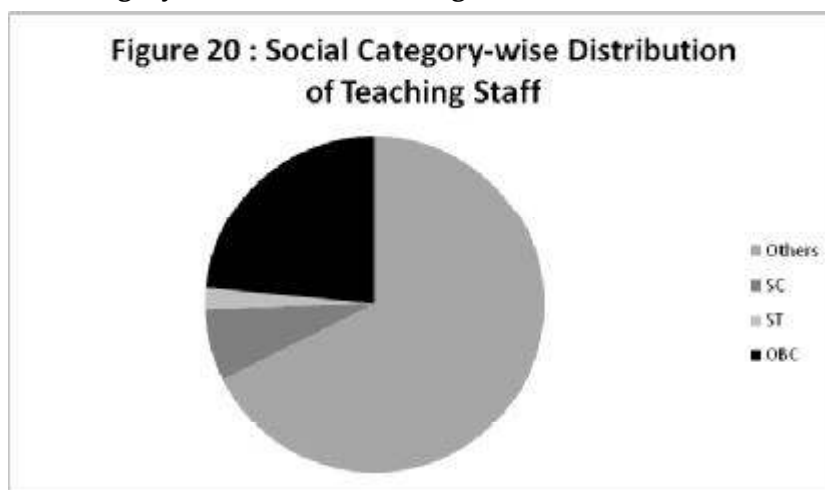
Programme wise enrolment of Schedule Tribe students

Programme	All Categories	Scheduled Tribe	Percentage of STs
Ph.D.-Doctor of Philosophy	104511	3815	0.3 %
M.Ch.-Master of Chirurgiae	326	0	0 %
M.Phil.-Master of Philosophy	31380	1181	3.7 %
M.A.-Master of Arts	787063	84240	6.1 %
M.Sc.-Master of Science	546978	16531	3.0 %
M.B.A. - Master of Business Administration	194338	7987	1.4 %
M.C.A. -Master of Computer Applications	244554	2816	1.1 %
M.Tech. -Master of Technology	178925	4550	2.5 %
M.D.-Doctor of Medicine	30462	910	2.9 %
B.A.-Bachelor of Arts	8597730	564951	6.5 %
B.Sc.-Bachelor of Science	3182423	130109	4.0 %
B.E.-Bachelor of Engineering	1896153	36564	1.9 %
B.Com.-Bachelor of Commerce	3261644	96903	2.9 %
L.L.B.-Bachelor of Law or Laws	223973	6423	2.8 %

(AISHE 2013-2014: T-28)

In the aforesaid table it is clear that the representation of ST students in higher educational programmes ranges from virtually being nil to 6.5% but it is far from the constitutional mandate of 8% representation. It is not surprising to see that even in the minimal representation it is predominantly in the arts discipline. In specialised medical field like Master of Chirurgiae (M.Ch.) the STs are nowhere to be found. In the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) STs are as low as 0.3%. It is clear that when STs are even less than 1% at PhD level they will definitely be underrepresented at the faculty level in all streams in higher education because Ph.D is a desirable and very soon going to be an essential criteria for faculty recruitment. In Master of Computer Applications STs are 1.1 %, in Master of Business Administration they constitute 1.4%, in Bachelor of Engineering they constitute 1.9%, in Master of Technology STs constitute 2.5%, in Bachelor of Law STs constitute 2.8%, in Doctor of medicine STs constitute 2.9%, in Bachelor of

Category wise Teachers in Higher Education: All India



(AISHE 2013-14: 26)

Commerce STs constitute 2.9%, in Master of Science STs constitute 3 %, in Bachelor of Arts STs constitute 6.5% and at Mater of Arts STs constitute 6.1%. The facts speaks in volume about the institutional blackout of STs across almost all the programmes and specifically from the science and engineering field.

Teachers play an important role in nurturing and fostering students. Further, constitution mandates 8% representation of STs in higher educational institutions. But the AISHE 2013-14 data reveals that ST teachers are as low as 2% in the institutions of higher education. This significantly diminishes STs voice in articulating their voice for promoting their interest. The following table reveals the category wise number of teachers in various types of institution of higher education.

Category-wise Number of teachers in various types of Universities

Type of University	Total Teachers	ST Teachers of ST	Percentage
Central University	11040	233	2.1 %
Institute of National Importance	12282	25	0.2 %
State Public University	53216	253	0.4 %

(AISHE 2013-2014: T-89)

In Central Universities the representation of STs is as low as 2.1%, in institutions of national importance it is 0.2% and in state public University STs representation is 0.4%. With this abysmal representation, in the institutions of higher education irrespective

of jurisdiction whether it is provincial government or central government the interest and demands of STs do not find their voice in the public sphere in institutions of higher education. The status of STs in Tripura is not different; it is discussed in following table-

Category wise Teachers in Higher Education: The Case of Tripura

State	Total Teachers	ST Teachers	Percentage of ST
Tripura	2293	238	10.3 %

(AISHE 2013-2014: T-68)

In Tripura STs comprises of 31.8% of total population but STs representation in teaching faculty of higher educational institutions of Tripura is 10.3%. Education plays an important for the marginalized section of society as it provides an effective avenue for empowerment and mobility. Through the discourse and deliberations in public sphere tribes are not only able to bring their existential and experiential issues in the centre stage for discussion but also they contribute by suggesting viable solutions for those problems.

Section-II

Curriculum, Pedagogy & the Culture of Social Closure in HEIs

The aforesaid section highlighted the numerical underrepresentation of tribal youth in the institutions of higher education. This section focus on the culture prevalent in institutions of higher education of India in general and Tripura in particular which further undermines the participation of limited tribal students in the institutions of higher education. The culture of silence promoted through multifarious means prevents tribal youth in articulating and expressing their voices in the public sphere.

It is pertinent that the tribal students need to bring their issues in the discourses taking place in the public sphere of HEIs. Because as, Xaxa would argue, 'The structure specific to tribal society gives rise to certain disadvantages' (Xaxa 2008: 95) and these disadvantages can be envisioned and bring out more effectively by the tribal themselves in the public sphere and possibly explore or suggest viable solution in tune with the lived experiences of the tribal students.

But it is noticed that tribal youth are not adequately represented in the HEIs. An interesting explanation can be found in Bourdieu's analysis. Bourdieu (1997) resurrected the concept of capital and outlined its three forms: Cultural capital, Social capital, and Economic capital. It illuminates some of the reasons where tribal students are at disadvantage in the educational institutions. According to Bourdieu cultural capital can be in three forms- embodied state, objectified state and institutionalized state. The embodied state- in the form of long-lasting dispositions of mind and body, so in case of tribal youth it can be effectively communicated by tribal themselves. In case of objectified state of cultural capital: in the form of cultural goods like books etc. Further, institutionalized state of cultural capital reflected in form of educational qualifications also puts tribal youth at disadvantage. Tribals are also at disadvantage in case of social capital as well, according to Bourdieu 'The volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent thus depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected.' (Bourdieu 1997:51). Therefore, in terms of cultivating network of social relationship tribals lag behind.

This put them in marginal roles in the higher educational premises.

Another factor which plays a key role in dis(empowering) students is the curriculum. Curriculum in these HEIs are remote to the lived experience of tribal community thereby fail to inspire the tribal youth for meaningful participation the public sphere of HEIs. Kumar writes that, 'Textbooks are universally used but they do not mean the same thing in different countries. Their practical use in the school's daily routine and their symbolic function vary from one educational system to the next' (Kumar 1986:1309-1310). Similarly, the practice of pedagogy is remote to the life of tribals. 'Pedagogical writings typically assume that textbooks have a universally accepted function. Not just pedagogical writings, even educational planning exercise are often based on the assumption than text-books are a value-free, globally relevant in-put' (Kumar 1986: 1309-1310). Echoing the same concern Geetha Nambissan argues that- 'Curricular and pedagogic are concern in the NCF. However, they fail to be adequately informed by an understanding of the specific context of educational deprivation, particularly where the economically and socially vulnerable communities such as dalits and adivasis are concerned. For instance, it is important to recognize that these communities were historically deprived of education because of the position of dalits as untouchables in the caste system and the isolation, exploitation and stereotypes of 'cultural backwardness' of adivasis. These factors may continue to be relevant to the educational experiences of these communities today has largely been ignored.' (Geetha Nambissan cited in Krishna, 2012:59). The marginalization of tribal students is further aggravated with the practice of discrimination. Discrimination and humiliation lowers the self esteem of tribal

students. The Thorat committee (2007) in its empirical investigation outlined the ways in which SC-ST community students at undergraduate and post graduation levels face discrimination (Thorat cited in Wankhede, 2013:187). These hurdles discourage the already miniscule tribal students to participate meaningfully in public sphere of HEIs where there is possibility to express and articulate the tribal demands peacefully.

In a comprehensive analysis of tribal students' participation and representation in the public sphere of HEIs, I have already outlined their miniscule presence in terms of quantity as tribals are far below the constitutional mandate. The nature of curriculum and pedagogy practiced in HEIs instead of equipping tribals for a meaningful participation in the public sphere of HEIs creates resistance and strengthens inertia for any meaningful participation by the tribals. Beside the curriculum and pedagogy, the speech pattern used in the educational premises further restricts meaningful participation of tribals in the public sphere. Basil Bernstein outlining this issue writes, that there are mainly two forms of speech pattern- 'elaborated code' and the 'restricted code,' in general the members of the working class and other marginalized groups of society are limited to the use of restricted codes where as members of the middle class and upper class whose culture is reflected and practiced in the educational institutions use both restricted and elaborate codes (Bernstine 1973:363-392). Such barriers prevent tribal students from effective articulation and expression of their views in the arena of public sphere.

If we look at the present educational scenario in HEIs in Tripura, the dialogic spirit essential for participating in public sphere is largely absent from the pedagogy and curriculum.

‘Critical pedagogy is rooted into the belief that education is fundamental to democracy and that no democratic society can survive without a formative culture shaped by pedagogical practices capable of creating the conditions for producing citizens who are critical, self-reflexive, knowledgeable, and willing to make moral judgment and act in socially responsible way’ (Giroux 2011:3). In absence of such critical pedagogy tribal students don’t find academic milieu intellectually stimulating. Academic environment fails to inspire critical consciousness in tribal youth of Tripura in particular and India in general.

This absence of critical consciousness in tribal youth of Tripura is partly due to the practice of, as Paulo Freire would say- ‘banking education’. Freire further explains that implicit in the banking concept is the assumption of a dichotomy between man and the world: man is merely *in* the world, not *with* the world or with others; man is spectator, not re-creator. In this view, man is not a conscious being; he is rather the possessor of a consciousness; an empty mind passively opens to the reception of deposits of reality from the outside world (1970: 49). Such a conception of education robs tribal students of their agency to create and transform.

Instead Freire, proposes, problem-posing, liberating education. Where teacher- of -the -student and student- of-the- teacher ceases to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with student-teacher (1970: 53). Such a dialogic education has liberating potential and is in tune with the democratic ethos. Freire saw students as vibrant and dynamic citizens who must constantly challenge the status quo and all forms of oppressions. But unfortunately the dialogic spirit, essential for participating in public sphere is absent from the curriculum and pedagogy of

IIIIs. As a result, knowledge as it is taught has been divorced from the structure of community.

Conclusion

There is a clamoring call to consider higher education as a democratic public sphere geared towards inspiring students to come to terms with awareness about their own sense of power and public voice as individual and social agents by enabling them to articulate and voice their lived experience in the discourses shaping the policy formulations. But due to miniscule representation of tribal youth in India in general and Tripura in particular, the tribal youth lacks the critical mass for their voice to be noticed in the discourses taking place in the public sphere of HEIs. Further, the dominant education system practiced in HEIs of Tripura follows the non-tribal pedagogy and also leans on curriculum centered on non-tribal lived experiences. Thus, the tribal culture becomes a problem to be adjusted in the mainstream education. Viewed from such centrist perspective the tribal culture is considered alien and strange rather than being considered as rich and unique. As a result there is systematic 'epistemic exclusion' of tribal issues from the curriculum and enquiry itself.

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The Mizo National Front Movements : An Account form Tripura

Benjamin Ralte

The third smallest State in the country Tripura,¹ erstwhile Hill Tipperah, is a small geographical entity on the north – eastern border of India. It is engulfed on the west, south and north by Bangladesh; Cachar district of Assam on the north – east and Mizoram on the east. It covers an area of 10,477 square kilometers and, according to the Census Report of 2001, the total population is 3,199,203.² Indigenous tribal constitute about 31 per cent of Tripura's population. In terms of numbers 9,93,426 people in the state's total population of 31,99,203 are tribal divided in 20 communities where male population constitute 50.76 per cent and female population constitute 49.23 per cent of tribal population. Population density of tribes is 19 per sq. km. According to the population census we can see that per cent population of tribal is decreasing (Year 1881 was 87.06 % and Year 2001 was 33.52 %). *Tripura/Tripuris*, the main ST in the state from which the state has earned its name 'Tripura', alone accounts for more than half of the total ST population of the state.

I

Although a few writings, both published and unpublished, have come to light on the history of the Mizos in Tripura yet there is no large scale research work done on the minority tribes, and most of the writings are carried on through legends and interviews and are not based on archival sources. Zairemthanga's *Tripura*

Mizo History (1992) is one of the few books which throws light on the history of the Mizos but is not based on archival sources. Similarly Hrangchal Hnehliana's *The Evangelization of the Tribes in Tripura* (1976) deals mainly with theological aspects of different tribal communities and references to Mizos are very few. Added to these is Rualchhinga's *Rōn Hrangcongva Sailo* (2002), which is biographical in nature, and mention is made only of the chief's role in particular.

From what we know, the first Mizo who was said to rule in Tripura as early as 1820 was a Palian chief, Sibuta³ who, it was said, ruled in and around Sakhan range. Sibuta was a famous and powerful chief with 25000 houses.⁴ His son, Lalrihua, ruled in and around 1833 although the exact location cannot be ascertained. Writing in 1884, Alexander Mackenzie mentioned the Kookie invasion on Tripuri subjects carried out by one, Laroo (Lalrihua), in 1826,⁵ which probably can be attributed to Lalrihua. Around the same time, we hear about another chief, Vanrochhunga, and his sons, Vanhmueithanga and Thanghulpuia, of Rivung clan who ruled in and around Longtorai range in Tripura.⁶ Zairenthanga observe that Chungnungliana ruled over Jampui range around 1822.⁷ He further asserts that Vanpuia, a Chuaungo chief, ruled Helkum range, north west of Jampui range.⁸ In 1910, one Rivung chief, Lalkunga ruled over the Sakhan range. Three years later, in 1913, he shifted to Jampui range and founded a new village called Sabual. Lalkunga did not stay long in Sabual, and after three years, returned to Sakhan and died there in 1826.⁹ John Shakespeare observed that "Cuci inhabitants of Tipperrah" mentioned by Lewin are the Mizos of today. He had, no doubt, that the 'Cucis' described therein were the Rivung, the advanced guard of the Lushai invasion.¹⁰

The first Mizo chiefs to enter Tripura with the prior permission of the Maharaja of Tripura were the Sailos. Dokhuma Sailo, the youngest of the twelve sons of the famous Suakpuilala Sailo of Mizoram, was the first Sailo chief came to Tripura. Accordingly in February 1904, about 600 Mizos, under the leadership of their chief Dokhuma Sailo, left Serhmun and moved to Tripura and settled on Hmuntha Hill, near Kumarghat.¹¹ Dokhuma Sailo asked the Maharaja of Tripura prior permission to enter Tripura. The Maharaja, on his part, assured help in every possible way and to give him land and rice till they had a settled life. In 1905, the Maharaja, Radha Kishore Manikya, in return for the services rendered to him, conferred the title of Raja on Dokhuma Sailo. While at Hmuntha, cholera broke out in June and many people were killed. The cause of this epidemic was attributed to the supply of bad quality rice by one Mussalman, Khalim Mia.¹⁸ The following year another epidemic broke out again killing 40 of them. These were considered one of the worst disasters in history. In 1922, the Maharaja Birendra Kishore Manikya conferred on him the title of *Raja Bahadur*,¹² in a durbar at Agartala. Starting from Damcherra in the north, Longai in the east, the reserved area (now in Bangladesh) in the south and Manu river in the west, Raja Bahadur Dokhuma Sailo had now the right to collect taxes from the people of this area, and enjoyed the right to collected *fathang*¹³ and *sachhiah*¹⁴.

II

The formation of Mizo National Front in October 1961 was not limited to the hilly state of Mizoram alone. Within a few years of its inception, its activities were felt even in the neighbouring state of Tripura, the erstwhile Hill Tipperah. Thus soon after the MNF declared independence simultaneously the Indian Army

made their appearance in the Mizo inhabited area of Jampui Hill in North Tripura. Although in the initial years there were hardly any volunteers from the area. However, the Indian Army assumed that the Jampui Mizos might have a close connection with the MNF of Mizoram and leaders of several villages were interrogated and questioned. The Army further imposed Coolies on the villagers and many youth were engaged as porters in the operations. As the coolies sometimes had to work on Sunday some villages sheltered five to ten Bru household in their village who would provide coolies on their behalves. Some of these families still continue to stay in Mizo village even today.

In the meantime, the MNF volunteers who regarded the hills as their area of operation began to make a forced donation to the extent of one percent of salary from government employees. Those who lived on jhum and orange cultivation are in no way exempted from paying this donation. The villagers on their part unwillingly contributed the donation out of fear. Besides the volunteers collected from the shopkeepers in the form of cigarettes, biscuits, and whatever they find suitable.

Towards the close of 1967, leaders of the MNF volunteers and Member of Parliament summoned a conference of leaders of several villages of Jampui Hill at Mr Lalduha's House at Vanghmun and strongly urged the villagers to join their party and form units in their respective villages. The Jampui Mizos however did not comply to their demands since they believe that the MNF demand was not appropriate for their hill area. Moreover, they were of the conviction that the MNF would never set up a consistent government to rely on.⁷

Surprisingly, the Government of India seeing little activities and resistance from the MNF in the hill areas began to be more

lenient towards the hill people and withdrew troops. Only a few men from Provincial Army Constabulary (PAC) and about ten policemen were stationed at the northern edge of Vanghmun village. At the same time, the only Government office includes educational institution, forest office – beat officer office and range office – PWD Inspection Bungalow. The total strength of PAC includes seven men with one wireless operator. It was under such condition that on 17 November 1967 the MNF volunteer from Mizoram crossed Langkaih (Longai) river from Lungthirek and carried out a surprise attack on the PAC station at the northern edge of the village. Two local youth Zathangkima and his brother Vanlalmalsawma enroute to the village were caught in the encounter. It was only after they reveal their identity saying ‘we are Mizo’ that they were directed to flee towards the jungle alongwith the wireless operator. The matter soon reached the Government of India and as much has been anticipated they lost no time in sending armies to flush out the MNF operation in the hills. The army came through the paddy field of Vanghmun, routing everything that stand in their way. The army presumed that the local people must have a close connection with the volunteer. They therefore decided to burn down the whole village. They arrested Mr Zawngtea, Pradhan of Vanghmun, Panchayat member Mr Rosanga, Mr Hnehliana and a few men from Lungthirek and were sent to district jail at Dharmanagar. The army also captured some volunteers from the hills who had recently joined the MNF and were sent to quarter guard at Agartala.¹⁶

In the meantime, the Government of India was made to believe that the local people has no hand in the late attack since two local youth were also caught in the encounter and that the wireless

operator was spared because of them. After a careful analysis of the situation the Government decided to cancel the earlier proposal of burning village. However their attitudes towards the hill people began to change and the whole of Jampui Hill which was earlier declared as Disturbed Area was confirmed. It was also decided that the villages should be grouped as had been carried out in Mizoram. This was however not carried out.

In December 1967, U N Sharma, the then Chief Commissioner, came to Jampui to look into the matter. This visit resulted in the release of the village leaders and volunteers who were jailed in Dharmanagar and Agartala respectively before the ensuing Christmas. But unfortunately two of the volunteers Thanchhuma of Bangla Zion and Sawithanga of Tlangsang died at Karchanpur hospital, 30 kilometers from Jampui. The death of these two volunteers was attributed to malnutrition while at Agartala. The visit of the Chief Commissioner was in a way beneficial for the hill people and may be regarded as compensation of the atrocities inflicted by the army upon the local people. The construction of roads which was earlier kept in the hands of Public Works Department was given to the local contractors through negotiation. More than thirty kilometers of jeepable roads were given to Mizo contractors under this agreement.

The frequent visit of Jampui hills by MNF volunteers from Mizoram made the Government of India more suspicious about the state of affairs. The Government, thereupon, made a more stringent security measures. The original site of security post was inadequate from strategic point of view. Accordingly it was shifted to a hillock south of the village of Vanghmun and continues to serve as permanent station till today. The number of security personnel was raised and it was placed under the

command of Brigadier who was in charge of the entire operational area. At Sabual about 15 kilometers from Vanghmun and a few kilometers from Mizoram border another post was set up. It was reported that security personnel of this station were not on good terms with the local people. They even raped a lady inside a church building. In spite of the new security arrangements the MNF volunteers continued collection of donations from the local people. Some of them were fortunate enough in getting away unmarked while others were not. At Behliangchhip and Tlangsang some MNF volunteers were killed while collecting donation.

III

Meanwhile, in Mizoram several political developments were taking place. When Meghalaya was granted the status of 'autonomous state' within Assam, in 1970 the Mizos renewed their demands for separate state. Ultimately united efforts, continuous struggles and great sacrifices rendered by the Mizos, the Government of India in 1971 agreed for political settlement and came out with a proposal to constitute Mizo Hills District into Union Territory. The Government of India enacted North Eastern (Areas) Reorganisation Act 1971 by amending the Indian Constitution (Twenty Seven Amendment) under which Mizoram was formed into the Union Territory with thirty three Assembly seats (thirty elected and three nominated). The Union Territory was formally inaugurated by Prime Minister of India, Mrs Indira Gandhi on 21 January 1972 and ceased to be part of Assam. Mizoram was given two seats in Parliament –one to be elected in the Lok Sabha and the other to be nominated in the Rajya Sabha. The High Court of Assam was further redesignated as Gauhati High Court with Jurisdiction over all the five states and two Union Territories in north eastern region. S.J. Das was appointed Chief

Commissioner. As desired by the people of Mizoram S.P.Mukherjee was appointed as the first Lieutenant Governor of Mizoram who assumed charge on 29 April 1972.

The first election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly took place in April 1972 and the Assembly was constituted on 29 April 1972. Of the 27 elected MLAs, 21 belonged to the Mizo Union, 6 from Congress and three were independents. The first sitting of the Legislature was held on 10 May 1972. Soon following the installation of the UT Government hostilities began to spurt in and around the towns, particularly Aizawl and Lunglei by the MNF outfits. On 28 February 1973, the MNF activist blew up a part of Aizawl power station. There were killings and widespread looting of cash from Government treasuries and rice from government godowns. Such disturbances compelled the authorities to reimposed night curfews and on March 1973 Mizoram was declared a disturbed area. Meanwhile, both the Mizo Union and the Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) under the leadership of Lalthanhawla felt that there would be advantage in merger of the two parties. Accordingly, on 21 January 1974 the Mizo Union merge with the Congress as approved by Prime Minister and Central Congress leadership and Ch. Chhunga continued as Chief Minister. The MPCC was dissolved and an *ad hoc* Congress Committee was appointed with Lalthanhawla as the President and Saprawnga as the Vice President.¹⁷

There were two brigades of the MNF operating - Lion and Dagger, the former commanded by Col. Zamana and the latter by Col. Vanthanga. From time to time, the MNF was issuing quit notices to non-Mizos residing in Mizoram. The situation in Mizoram was very fluid and life was becoming insecure not only

for the non-Mizos but also a large number of loyal Mizos. The most sensational incident occurred on 13 January 1975 when G.S. Arya, Inspector General of Police; L.B. Sewa Deputy Inspector General of Police, and K Panchapakeshan, Superintendent of Police were killed while in a conference in IGs office. Immediately curfew was imposed in Aizawl. The Union Home Minister Brahmananda Reddy at once rushed to Aizawl. Further violence continued. On 6 August 1975 MNF and its allied organisations were again declared unlawful, the previous notifications having been expired. By the close of 1975 many rebels were arrested, a few of them surrendered while some were killed in encounter and a large number of arms and ammunitions were seized.¹⁸

A peace advisory body was formed with Rev Zairema as Chairman and Lalthanhawla as Secretary. Members were drawn from various denominations of the church, students and political parties. It started a non official dialogue with the MNF. The Problem, however, continued, not as in breach of law and order but more in a bulk of people continuing to stay away from the mainstream of national life. On 29 August 1975 Laldenga wrote to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi expressing his desire to come to a settlement with the Government of India, which would ensure religious and cultural safeguards for the Mizos. In February 1976, Laldenga signed an agreement by which he agreed to – i) abjure violence, ii) accepted Mizoram as an integral part of India, iii) Seek a solution to the Mizoram problem within the constitution of India, and iv) hand over all MNF arms to the Central Government, after collection in a camp within a month. The MNF leaders who were in Arakan Hills were brought to Calcutta to ratify this agreement. The MNF activists were somewhat confused

and they did not come up to hand over their arms. Hence there was no progress in implementation of the agreement.¹⁹

In January 1977, general elections were announced in the country. The Janata Party came to power and the new Prime Minister Morarji Desai wanted Laldenga to honour his commitment of 1976 for surrender of the MNF with their arms. Since Laldenga could not implement his promise, the Home Ministry felt that he should hand over authority to the MNF National Council who would then deal directly with the Government of India. Accordingly, on May 1977, Laldenga handed over his authority to the MNF National Council.

The breakdown of talks with Laldenga was followed by a persistent demand for elections to be held in Mizoram. Ch Chhunga resigned in May 1977 and President's rule followed in the territory. On 17 May 1978 second elections to Mizoram Assembly took place and People's Conference (PC) secured comfortable majority. On 2 June 1978 Brig. Thenphunga Sailo was sworn in as Chief Minister ending President's Rule in the territory. Soon after swearing in, he addressed a public meeting that return of popular government signalled in a new era of peace which his ministry would wholeheartedly try to resolve. However, due to the development of anti-MNF attitude within the party resulting in the division and dissension within the party caused Brig Sailo's government to collapse. Mizoram was again brought under President's Rule on 11 November 1978. Fresh elections were held in April 1979 in which Brig Sailo's People's Conference again emerged as the ruling party by winning 18 out of 30 seats. It was then that the MNF underground served notice on all non-Mizos to 'quit Mizoram' by July 1 1979. The early parts of July saw several fresh incidents in the hills and ultimately on 8 July 1979 MNF

were again declared unlawful. The Centre, however, resumed peace talks soon after Mrs Indira Gandhi returned to power in 1980. Zail Singh, the Home Minister, announced another accord on July 30 1980 following which ceasefire was announced. Nonetheless, Brig T Sailo's People's Conference hostile relations with the MNF resulted in deadlock, and the talks soon broke down again in 1982.

In 1984 Election to the fourth Mizoram Assembly was held. The People's Conference lost its popularity and the Congress led by Lalthanhawla emerged as the ruling party. On 5 may 1985 a four member Mizoram Congress (I) Ministry with Lalthanhawla as Chief Minister was sworn in. This being the first time Congress (I) came to power in Mizoram. The Congress was able to gain majority due to the better advantage it had in bringing about or the promise of bringing about peaceful settlement over all the other political parties. Steps were taken for resumption of talks and on October 2 1984 Laldenga was again summoned to resume talks. He was scheduled to meet the Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi on 31 October, 1984 but her assassination on the fateful day prevented the meeting. Talks were resumed only after five months.

IV

The assumption of power by Rajiv Gandhi following his mother's death signalled the beginning of a new era in Indian politics. Laldenga met the Prime Minister on 15th February 1985. Some contentious issues, which could not be resolved, during previous talks referred to him for his advice. All trends indicated that neither the Centre nor the MNF would pass up the opportunity that has now presented itself to have a full lenient and flexible. New Delhi felt that Mizo problem had been dragging

on for the long a time, while the MNF was convinced that bidding farewell to arms to live as respectable Indian Citizens was the only ways of achieving peace and development.

Statehood was a prerequisite to the implementing of the accord signed between the MNF and the Union Government on 30 June 1986. The document was signed by Laldenga, on the behalf of MNF, and the Union Home Secretary RD Pradhan on behalf of the Central Government, Lalkhama Chief Secretary of Mizoram, on behalf of Mizoram Government. (for details of accord see appended).



The MNF volunteers came out of their hiding and surrendered arms to makeshift bamboo huts up for the purpose at Parva and Marpara. A total of 614 activists gave themselves up in less than two weeks in July. Large quantities of firearms including LMGs and rifles were received from them. While the MNF kept its part of the bargain, the Centre initiated efforts to raise the status of Mizoram to a full fledged State. A Constitution Amendment Bill and another to confer statehood on Mizoram were passed in the Lok Sabha on 5 August 1986.



The formalization of Mizoram State took place on 20th February, 1987. Chief Secretary Lalkhama read out the proclamation of statehood at a public meeting organised at Aizawl's Parade Ground. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi flew to Aizawl to inaugurate the new state. He said in Aizawl 'Verdict of the people must be respected. Poll in Mizoram was the most friendly and most gentlemanly contest perhaps anywhere in the country.' Laldenga was sworn in as the Chief Minister. Hiteshwar Saikia was appointed as Governor of Mizoram. With the assumption of power in Mizoram the MNF movements in Mizoram and Tripura also came to an end

Appended

Mizoram Accord, 1986²⁰

Memorandum of Settlement

Preamble

1. Government of India have all along been making earnest effort to bring about an end to the disturbed condition in Mizoram and to restore peace and harmony.



Toward this end, initiative was taken by the late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi on the acceptance by Shri Lalenga on behalf of the Mizo National Front (MNF) of the two conditions, namely, cessation of violence by MNF and to hold talks within the framework of the Constitution. A series of discussions were held with Shri Lalenga. Settlement on various issues reached during the course of talks is incorporated in the following paragraphs.

Restoration of Normalcy

1. With a view to restoring peace and normalcy in Mizoram, the MNF Party, in their part undertake within the agreed time-frame, to bring out all underground personnel of the MNF with their arms, ammunitions, and equipments, to ensure their return to civil life, to abjure violence and generally to help in the process of restoration of normalcy. The modalities of bringing out all underground personnel and the deposit of arms, ammunitions and equipments will be as worked out. The implementation of the foregoing will be under the supervision of the Central Government.

2. The MNF party will take immediate steps to amend its articles of Association so as to make them conform to the provision of Law.

3. The Central Government will take steps for the settlement and rehabilitation of underground after considering the scheme proposed in this regard by the Government of Mizoram.

4. The MNF will not undertake to extend any support to the Tripura National Volunteer (TNV), Peoples' Liberation Army of Manipur (PLA) and any other such group by way of training, supply of arms or providing protection or in any other matters.

Legal Administrative and Other Steps

1. With a view to satisfying the desires and aspirations of all sections of the people of Mizoram, the Government will initiate measures to confer Statehood on the Union Territory of Mizoram subject to the other stipulation contained in this Memorandum of Settlement.

2. To give effect to the above, the necessary legislative and administrative measures will be undertaken, including those for the enactment of Bills for the amendment of the Constitution and other laws for the conferment of Statehood as aforesaid, to come into effect on a date to be notified by the Central Government.

3. The amendment aforesaid shall provide, among other things, for the following:

I. The territory of Mizoram shall consist of the territory specified in Section 6 of the North Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act, 1971.

II. Notwithstanding anything contained in the Constitution, no act of Parliament in respect of (a) Religion or Social practices of the Mizos, (b) Mizo customary Law or procedure, (c) Administration of Civil and Criminal Justice involving decisions according to Mizo customary Law, (d) Ownership and transfer

of land, shall apply to the State of Mizoram unless the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram by a resolution so decides.

Provided that nothing in this Clause shall apply to any Central Act in force in Mizoram immediately before the appointed day.

III. Article 170 Clause (1) shall, in relation to Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, have effect as if for the word *sixty* the word *forty* has been substituted.

1. Soon after the Bill of Conferment of Statehood becomes law, and when the President is satisfied that normalcy has returned and that conditions are conducive to the holding of free and fair elections, elections to the Legislative Assembly will be initiated.

2. (a) The centre will transfer resource to the new Government keeping in view the change in Status from a Union Territory to a State and will include resources to cover the revenue gap for the year.

(b) Central assistance for Plan will be fixed taking note of any residuary gap in resources so as to sustain the approved plan outlay and the pattern of assistance will be as in the case of Special category State.

3. Border trade in local produced or grown agriculture commodities could be allowed under a scheme to be formulated by the Central Government, subject to international arrangement with neighbouring Countries.

4. The Innerline Regulation, as now in force in Mizoram, will not be amended or repealed without consulting the State Government.

Other Matters

5. The rights and privileges of the minorities in Mizoram as envisaged in the constitution, shall continue to be preserved and

protected and their social and economic advancement shall be ensured.

6. Steps will be taken by the Government of Mizoram at the earliest to review and codify the existing customs, practices, law or other usages relating to the matters specified in Clauses (a) to (b) of para 4.3 (II) of the memorandum, keeping in view that an individual Mizo may prefer to be governed by Acts of Parliament dealing with such matters and which are of general application.

7. The question of Unification of Mizo inhabited areas of other States to form one administrative unit was raised by the MNF delegation. It was pointed out to them, on behalf of the Government of India, that Article 3 of the Constitution of India describes the procedure in this regard but that the Government cannot make any commitment in this respect.

8. It was also pointed out on behalf of the Government that as soon as Mizoram becomes a State:

i. The Provisions of Part XVII of the Provision of the Constitution will apply and the State will be liberty to adopt any one or more language to be used for all or any of the official purposes of the State.

ii. It is open to the State to move the establishment of the separate University in the State in accordance with the prescribed procedure.

iii. In the light of the Prime Minister's Statement at the Joint Conference of the Chief Justices, Chief Minister and Law Ministers held at New Delhi on 31st August, 1985 Mizoram will be entitled to have a High Court of its own if it so wishes.

1. (a) It was noted that there is already a scheme in force for payment of exgratia amount to heirs/ dependants of persons who were killed during disturbances in 1966 and thereafter in the

Union Territory of Mizoram. Arrangement will be made to expeditiously disburse payment to those eligible persons who have already applied but who had not been made such payment so far.

a. It was noted that consequence on verification done by a joint team of officers, the Government of India had already made arrangement for payment of compensation in respect of damage to crop: building destroyed/damaged during the action in Mizoram, and rented charges of building and land occupied by security force. There may, however, be some claim which were referred and verified by the above team but is not yet settled expeditiously. Arrangement will also be made for payment of pending claim of rented charges of land/building occupied by the security forces.

Sd/-	Sd/-	Sd/-
LALDINGA	R.D.PRADHAN	LAIKHAMA
On behalf of	Home Secretary	Chief Secretary
Mizo National Front	Government of India.	Government of Mizoram

Notes and references

¹ The name *Tripura* is Sanskrit, meaning “three cities” (corresponding exactly to the Greek *Tripolis*). The Sanskrit name is linked to Tripura Sundari, the presiding deity of the Tripura Sundari Temple at Udaipur, one of the 51 *Shakti Peethas* (pilgrimage centres of *Shaktian*), and to the legendary tyrant king Tripur, who reigned in the region. Tripur was the 39th descendant of Druhyu, who belonged to the lineage of Yayati, a

king of the Lunar Dynasty. However, there have been suggestions to the effect that “the origin of the name Tripura is doubtful”, raising the possibility that the Sanskritic form is just due to a folk etymology of a Tibeto-Burman (Kokborok) name. Variants of the name include *Twipra*, *Tuipura* and *Tippera*. A Kokborok etymology from *tui* (water) and *pra* (near) has been suggested; the boundaries of Tripura extended to the Bay of Bengal when the kings of the Twipra Kingdom held sway from the Garo Hills of Meghalaya to Arakan, the present Rakhine State of Burma; so the name may reflect vicinity to the sea. Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

² Final Population Total, Census of India 2001, Government of India
Wikipedia the free encyclopedia

³ Zairemthanga *Tripura Mizo History* Zawlnuam 1992 pp.8-9 However, Rosanga (85 years) Vanghmun, observed that one, Chhawnpuia, father of Darlalpuui, carried on depredations at Kailashahar, killed several people and carried away many captives, among whom was a boy who later turned out to be Sibuta

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 14

⁵ Alexander Mackenzie *History of the Relations of the Government with the Hill Tribes of the North East Frontier of Bengal* Calcutta, 1884 Reprint New Delhi 1999 p.288

⁶ Zairemthanga *op.cit.*, pp.27-31

⁷ *Ibid.*, p.9

⁸ *Ibid.*,

⁹ Malsawmpari Ralte *History of the Mizos in Tripura in the Colonial Period* (unpublished M.Phil. Thesis) NEHU, 1993 p.31

Tribal Youth Issues, Challenges and Perspective

¹⁰ A.M.Dutta *A Study on the Customs of Jaintia Hills in Tripura* (Directorate of Research, Government of Tripura,) Agartala, 1987 p.3

¹¹ Zairenthanga *op.cit.*, p.48

¹² *Ibid.*, p.43

¹³ A measure of paddy, to the extent of four tins, approximately one maund to be paid by each family to the chief.

¹⁴ A meat tax collected on portion of any animal killed

¹⁵ Interview with R Thangluia Vanghmun Age 90

¹⁶ *Ibid.*,

¹⁷ Animesh Ray *Mizoram* New Delhi 1983 p.171

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.172-173

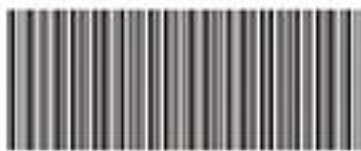
¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.175

²⁰ C.Nunhara *Mizoram : Society and Polity* New Delhi 1996 pp.290-293

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