

EMPOWERMENT OF TRIBAL COMMUNITIES : KEYNOTE ADDRESS

4TH JANUARY, 2014

Dr. Chandrakant Upadhyaya
Director

**TRIBAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING INSTITUTE
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD
(GUJARAT)**

EMPOWERMENT OF TRIBAL COMMUNITIES : KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Dr. Chandrakant Upadhyay*

Tribals in India : Background :

We find a number of tribes habitating in various parts of the world. Except African countries, the largest population of tribals is found in India. There are as many as 658 tribal communities in India; and they habitate in forests and hilly areas. According to 2011 census report, the population of tribal people in India is 10,42,81,034; which is 8.26 per cent of total population of India. Usually, they are found in 26 out of 35 States and 4 Centrally administered areas. Interestingly they cover 15% of the geographical area of the nation. More prominently, the tribal communities are very important for the nation, both from coverage of area and the percentage of population. In other words, we cannot think of development of the nation, keeping aside these 8.26% population and 15% of the geographical area.

Composition of Tribal Population :

The composition of population of tribal people in India in its various parts present a peculiar design demonstraing unequal distribution among States but at the same time depicting a clear trend in such distribution. e.g. the largest number of tribal people are found in eastern and north-eastern states. In some parts of India, they are scarcely distributed and in some parts they are intensively habitated. In some states, they cover limited geographical area, but in other States, or other parts of the same State, they occupy larger portion of land. Occupation wise, even to-day we find several tribal groups working only to get their livelihood requirements, and they are satisfied with bare necessities of life. Some of the tribal groups are engaged in alternative mode of agriculture and shift-farming. Most of the tribal communities deploy old traditional mode of farming.

*Director, Tribal Research and Training Institute, Ahmedabad.

TRIBAL POPULATION IN INDIA (as per 2011 census)

Sr.No.	Name of the State	Population
1.	Jammu and Kashmir	14,93,299
2.	Himachal Pradesh	3,92,126
3.	Uttarakhand	2,91,903
4.	Rajasthan	92,38,534
5.	Uttar Pradesh	11,34,273
6.	Bihar	13,36,573
7.	Sikkim	2,06,360
8.	Arunachal Pradesh	9,51,821
9.	Nagaland	17,10,973
10.	Manipur	9,02,740
11.	Mizoram	10,36,115
12.	Tripura	11,66,813
13.	Meghalay	25,55,861
14.	Assam	38,84,371
15.	West Bengal	52,96,953
16.	Jharkhand	86,45,042
17.	Orissa	95,90,756
18.	Chhatisghadh	78,22,902
19.	Madhya Pradesh	1,53,16,784
20.	Gujarat	89,17,174
21.	Div-Daman	15,363
22.	Dadra-Nagar Haveli	1,78,564
23.	Maharashtra	1,05,10,213
24.	Andhra Pradesh	59,18,073
25.	Karnatak	42,48,987
26.	Goa	1,49,275
27.	Laksha-Dwip	61,120
28.	Keral	4,84,839
29.	Tamilnadu	7,94,697
30.	Andaman-Nicobar Island	28,530
	Total	10,42,81,034

At a glance, it could be seen that 1/3rd of the above states are responsible for $\frac{4}{5}$ th part of the above population; and only 20% of tribal people habitate in 70% of remaining States.

Constitutional Provisions for Tribal Development :

We have made special provisions in our Constitution for development of tribal people and tribal areas in post-independence era; and a well-knit infrastructure is developed in our country for social, economic and educational development of tribal people and to protect them against exploitation by other sections of the society. The Government have been implementing a number of schemes for their socio-economic and educational development. A huge amount is allotted and earmarked for development of tribal people and tribal areas in each five year plans. During first four five year plans, no effective and expected results were found outcoming irrespective of substantial amount of expenditure made during these plan. Hence, from 5th Five Year Plan onward, the methodology of Tribal Sub-plan was adopted since 1974, providing for intensive development efforts in those areas where there was concentration of tribal population, complying with the recommendations of Dr. Dubey Committee. Accordingly, for better and effective implementation of tribal development programmes, 194 Integrated Tribal Development Projects - ITDPs, 259, MADAS. 82 clusters and 75 special schemes for development of Primitive Tribe Groups were initiated at the national level. Besides, a number of individualised and area-oriented schemes were rigourously implemented, These schemes included for Drinking water, electrification, health services, educational, economic development. women development as well as infrastructure development.

Vicious Circle of Poverty :

Now, despite all such schemes and continuous flow of funds, somehow, the development of tribal people and tribal areas doesnot commensurate with the expected level. Lack of infrastructural facilities necessarily affect economic development of the area. Likewise, lack of proper educational facilities compell the children to discontinue education; or they are required to avail of these facilities at a taluka or district place; but here too, they face the problem of lack of adequate transport facilities or better condition of link roads. Consequently, the vicious circle of poverty prevails.

We have to think seriously about a paradox that on one hand, huge funds are continuously flowing in tribal areas for welfare of tribal people; but still the tribal people could not be brought to the main stream. With the result, the tribal communities are comparatively less developed in terms of socio-economic and educational parameters against the mainstream population. Let us examine this issue in terms of figures. The literacy rate among tribal communities is 58.96% as per 2011 census, which surely shows upward trend; but if we look at the number of tribal children going for higher education or professional courses, they are less in number. Likewise, the infrastructure facilities in health - no.of PHC^s, sub- PHC^s and CHS^s are less in number as compared to number of people. Even where such facilities are provided, they lack adequate number of health-staff. Consequently we find more number of people suffering from Sickle Cell Anemia, and find more children sufferings from mal-nutrition.

Prosperous Tribal Areas and poor tribal people :

The States which have large number of tribal people in their population are also gifted with the immense supply of natural resource such as water, forests and land as also minerals. They have better geographical conditions and largest man-power; but still they are less developed. They are gifted with more that adequate rains; yet they have a problem of drinking water and lack of irrigation facilities. Because of lack of proper planning, they are not able to encash the benefits of favourable balance of natural resources. The major portion of tribal communities are dependent on agriculture; but they donot get adequate water for their farming; though the areas have largest rivers and largest dams constructed on them. Consequently, among the tribal people, the nuber of farmers are on decrease and that of agriculture labourers and other labourers are on increase.

Percentage of Tribal Farmers in the country in last three decades

Year	No.of farmers %	No.of Agricultural labourers %	No.engaged in cottage industries %	No. engaged in other occupations %
1991	55.00	32.38	2/97	4.06
2001	50.92	28.43	1.77	18.87
2011	40.72	36.30	1.34	21.65

As discussed earlier, there have been immense natural resources available in tribal areas along with a large number of people forming the man-power supply. There have been adequate water, dense forests and plenty of rains. A large number of people depend on agriculture directly or indirectly and where the forests can also provide resources for livelihood. But unfortunately, the people are separated from water, land and forests. This condition calls for an early need for empowerment of tribal people.

Causes of Migration :

The employment is not adequately available in tribal areas. People usually, more often than not, migrate to other places in search of work. During migration they carry their children along with them, because there is no body to look after them at home. Again, place of migration does not necessarily ensure them employment. Whatever work they get is transitory and irregular as well as in an unorganised sector. Since the children have also migrated, their education suffers. The place where they work, does not provide them even the basic facilities. They have been largely exploited there by a contractor, a Mukadam, local people or even government officials.

Emerging Problems :

Earlier we discussed that there have been a number of schemes and programmes being implemented by the Government for improvement of health and education and for economic development and improving their standard of living; but still the development of people cannot be witnessed to the effected level. Besides this, the social aspect of tribal life gets weakened. To take a few examples : the sex-ratio among 0-6 age group of children shows discrimination against girl-child. The tribal girls are getting married among non-tribal families due to the weaker economic conditions and/or for getting money against such deal. What are the reasons for the trend ?

- Is it due to lack of education ?
- Are they unaware about the consequences ? or
- Is it due to failure of Government to take appropriate action at proper time ?

The empowerment of tribal people is possible only when tribal people

themselves try to understand and identify their own problems in proper perspectives of development issues. They should think, decide, act and be empowered.

We have also to learn lessons from the past history. We will have to take into account the total aspects of tribal life and have to adopt comprehensive approach. Only then, the sustainable development will become possible for long run. Taking a stock of current situation, and analysing all the factors responsible for such conditions, we have to come to the conclusion that it is high time that there is increased consciousness among tribal communities throughout in India and that the tribal communities acquire empowerment.

Origin of the concept of Empowerment :

The idea of empowerment has its origin in the World War I. At the end of the war, millions of people had lost their lives, several million people had become injured and/or handicapped. The Psychological effects of war were all the more disastrous. People were suffering from the fear of war. Those who could save their lives were suffering from chronic feelings of fear, worries, pains, negativism. The idea of empowerment was originated to make such people come out of all negative feelings, to motivate them for better life, to instill in them the feelings of confidence and courage, hopes and aspirations and to make them stable in thoughts and action. But unfortunately, the post-war impact was so much rampant that people were economically crippled, physically weak and mentally perturbed that the idea of empowerment met with infanticide. It died before it can grow.

Evelene East remarks that the concept of empowerment had emerged in the decade to 1970s during discussion on literacy in Latin American countries. Usha Thakrey believes that the roots of the concept of empowerment lies in the thoughts of Paulo Frierey on consciousness. The women workers and activists have developed the concept in terms of consciousness building among deprived classes. The concept became more popular during 1980s.

In India, the concept of empowerment has been enjoined with the development works of various kinds among Government, non-Government and institutional activities. As on to-day, in almost all development programmes initiated or assisted by

Government, there is a tag of empowerment attached to it. Of course, there have been quite positive impact of this approach on various aspects of Social Development issues.

Again to quote Evelene, the word “Power” is included in ‘Empowerment’; and that concept of power is closely related to the concept of Empowerment. Let us not forget that ‘Power’ and ‘Empowerment’ are not synonym. Both the words are to be understood in their respective contexts. The kind of activities or processes that go with empowerment include : movement, freedom, to get to-gether with a purpose, to show self-confidence, firmness, assertive attitude, to demonstrate one’s abilities and capacities and to face experiences and challenges - All these form very significant components of empowerment.

The common meaning that can be attributed to empowerment is to lead to the path of power.

According to Kumud Sharma, empowerment is a process animing at bringing change in the form and direction of formative factors which marginalise women and other deprived groups.

According to Usha Thakerey, Empowerment is that process which can control the factors which restrict the powers of self, the resources & the thought processes. The process of empowerment is, comprehensive and covers the social, economic and political aspects.

The famous Sociologist of India, Dr. Yogendra Singh notes that Empowerment suggests to develop consciousness among the marginalised groups and discriminated people to :

- become partners in the process of development and to be able to acquire power;
- become able to eliminate the conditions which make such groups the victims of exploitation;
- become able to remove the injustice imposed upon them;
- become conscious about inequality, exploitation, suppression, discrimination etc.

Empowerment is such a process which make the poeple and communities able

to avail of the benefits in their lives. It strengthens their capacity to communicate and to control the kind of relationship. People do have the inherent capacity to solve their problems. What they need is motivation and direction to realise that.

Development Issues :

The word 'development' has many connotation and it encompasses several theories. The voice of powerful person is heard in 'development'; and that of a common people becomes silent. The tribal community is made of common people. This community, all over India, has habitated in the natural environment of water, hills, forests and land. The 'Vanwasi' (forest dweller) is his identity, The constitution of India has made him known as belonging to Scheduled Tribes. People usually know him as a tribal.

These tribals have maintained themselves from the forests and forest products. He has been associated with the mainstream or with the outside world only due to recognition given to him through some constitutional provisions. When we talk of tribal development. We can realise that the constitution of India, through its provisions contained in the Directive Principles of State Policy has carved out a way for welfare of people wherein the provisions have been made for State interference to attain development of people, especially the weaker sections of the society. Tribal development aims at developing tribal communities (STs) in respect of their Social, educational and economic development so as to help them to become free from any kind of exploitation and to lead healthy and graceful life. There have been broadly three approaches to tribal development :

(1) Alienation (2) Assimilation and (3) Integration :

1. Those believing in Alienation advocate that let the tribal people develop according to its culture.
2. Those believing in Assimilation advocate that the tribals should mix up with non-tribals; and that tribals should become a part of the main stream and attain development.
3. Those believing in Integration advocate that the tribals should continue to preserve their distinct identity of culture and simultaneously should, acquire modern knowledge and modern technology etc.

Gandhiji had advocated that tribals should be involved in their development and they should participate in their process of development; wherein the social and cultural aspects should not be lost sight of. **It can be said that the stable, sustainable democratic, decentralised and participatory development of tribal people and participatory social forestry is the need of the day.**

W.W. Rostov, a famous economist, in his book "Stages of Economic Growth has observed that Development is "take off into self-sustained growth". In other words, it is up-growing growth.

According to Human Development Report, 2013, India is at number 136 in the total list of 187 countries with its development stage at 0.55%. It is a known fact that 53.7% of the people in India live under Below Poverty Line (BPL).

Tribal Communities are associated with the rural communities. A village is the basic unit of development in India. Therefore, necessarily, the development of tribal people becomes imperative. The population growth for India is 17.67 percent and that for tribal communities, it is 23.7 percent (2011)

B.K. Roy Burman (1986) had indicated five aspects in context with tribal development activities :

1. Satisfying minimum requirements
2. Control and Management of produced wealth
3. Hope of employment
4. Wider participation of people in the process of Development
5. Inclusion of Social, cultural and Political aspects for national integration.

This results in decrease in regional acquality, and results in creating self-reliance. It creets a physical environment for distribution of income, distribution of equal benefits of development, social stratification, and environment of giving a fight without adversely affecting qualities of life.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was in favour of mainstreaming of tribal people. However, he had a great respect for tribal culture. Therefore, in consultation with verier Alwin, he designed 'Adivasi Panchil" It included :

1. To attain development, while preserving their personality
2. Motivation them for developing their arts and culture
3. Respect their rights over forests and land
4. Employing tribal people only, for development and administration
5. Take care to see that one is not impressed at the temptation of benefits of the schemes.

The real test of the essence of principles lies in finding out how much of qualitative conduct was really deployed for actual work.

Committees and Commissions :

So far, a number of Committees/Commissions have been constituted to study the problems of the tribals, and to make recommendation for their development. They are :

- Renuka Ray Committee
- Alwin Committee
- Dhebar Cmmission
- Lokur Committee
- Dahyabhai Nayak Committee
- Siluwa Committee
- Hathi Committee
- National Commission on Agriculture, 1976
- Mehta Committee
- Committee for development of backward areas
- Dr. Bhuriya Committee

All these committees/Commissions have made suitable recommendations for sustainable development of tribal communities, preservation of resources and its use, and development of tribal people - Socially, economically, educationally, in occupations, in careers, in health etc.

The first effort for tribal development was made in 1954. Thereafter, multi-pur-

pose community development programmes were undertaken. Schemes for dense population and scattered population were implemented. Development Programmes based on Unit were formed. Integrated development programmes were introduced. Thus, the focus of development shifted from here to there, based on different recommendations.

This can be more clearly seen from the amount of assistance provided and total expenditure made for tribal areas during various five year plans :

(Rs. in crores)

Five Year Plan	Total Outlay	Outlay for Tribal Dev.	Percentage
First F.Y. Plan	1960	19.93	1.00
Second F.Y. Plan	4672	42.92	0.9
Third F.Y. Plan	8577	50.53	0.6
Fourth F.Y. Plan	6756	32.32	0.6
Fifth F.Y. Plan	15402	75.00	0.5
Sixth F.Y. Plan	39322	1182.00	3.01
Seventh F.Y. Plan	97500	3383.88	3.47
Eighth F.Y. Plan	180000	6500.00	3.61
Ninth F.Y. Plan	110454	6464.00	5.85
Tenth F.Y. Plan	143399	1754.00	1.22
Eleventh F.Y. Plan	143880	4558.00	3.16
Twelfth F.Y. Plan	857786	14711	1.71

Source : Bhupendrasingh - 1998 (1st to 7th Plan)

Planning Commission - Ninth Plan Document P.18

Planning Commission - Tenth Plan Document Appendix A-3

Planning Commission - Eleventh Plan Document Annexure 32

Planning Commission - Twelfth Plan Document Tale 3.14 P.83

Absolutely speaking, there has been constant increase in plan outlay and the expenditure. There have been various schemes regarding irrigation, water, seeds,

mechanical instruments in order to provide them with agricultural production instruments. India is an agriculture- oriented country; but the contribution in agriculture production in India; by this 8% population is totally negligible; simply because they donot have adequate resources, nor do they have proper latest information.

During the fifth F.Y. Plan, under Dr. Dubey Committee's recommendations, the tribal sub-plan scheme was implemented. The objective was to raise their standard of living. It introduced the concept of Human Development Indices. It also included the objective of 'Society free from exploitation'. A Tribal doesnot have adequate resources and he lives with minimum instruments. Obviously even the capable individual or society without economic means, will be poorer and weaker. He is exploited by capitalists; which hinders his development process. The class becomes a labour class because he doesnot have enough money. In some of the states, he leads a life of Bonded labour. e.g. in some of the villages of Gujarat, the persons from Halpati tribe families, work on the farm of Anavils for generations. There could be more such examples in other States too.

The tribals migrate from remote villages to district centres or even outside the State in search of employment. He migrate because he is hungry; he is poor, he doesnot have resources, he doesnot have opportunities. According to 2001 census, 29.70% tribals migrate from their native places to other cities, temporarily or on permanent basis.

Status of Women in Tribal Society :

Women constitute one half of the total population. But she has a secondary status in the society. In many societies, a women plays double or triple roles; but her life is voice-less. However, among tribal communities, the social status of a women as compared to main stream society is better, higher and distinct. In economic sphere, when in other societies, women were confined to four walls of a house; in tribal societies, the women worked hand-in-hand with her male counterpart; She is not only a wife or a mother; but also a bread earner. She gets herself engaged in agricultural activities, animal husbandary, collection of fire wood from the forests or collection of minor products from the forests. She goes to a weekly market (Hat) for purchases with the husband. The women in tribal society, for ages, has been enjoying equal status as a partner. The

birth of a girl in a tribal family is not considered as a burden. Besides, She is not subjected to unequal and unjust attitude in marriage, re-marriage divorce, widow marriage etc.

In Present day, we find two different and distinct conditions among tribal women. On one hand, there are women who are extremely poor habitating in most backward areas. Her life is difficult because she is illiterate or less educated. On other hand, we have a tribal woman, who is very well educated, has a stable economic life and has made a place in the social system. Since, both of them have different conditions, we have to give a separate thought while providing a plan of action. Let us examine this one by one.

A Poor Tribal Woman :

Tribals are poorest among poor. We have the poor tribal women in great number. They habitate in remote forest areas. They habitate in separate scattered places. They are illiterate or poorly educated. They have very limited scope for employment. Being extremely poor, they suffer from Mal-nutrition.

The "Care" conference held in 1994, by UNO - Population and Development Division had given central place to Women's Empowerment. The UNOP report mentions that, among 150 crores people living BPL life, 70 percent are women. The burden of poverty is shared by them unevenly.

A poor tribal woman usually gets one square meal a day. She feeds herself or her child (ren) with great difficulties. The holding of land is very small, the irrigation facilities are absent. The agriculture products are not sufficient to meet the annual requirement of a family. The employment opportunities are less. Even if she migrates outside in search of work, it does not ensure her full salary. The forests have been now not so dense. Besides, due to Government official's unnecessary interference, they have to go on foot at a long distance to collect firewood ! There too, there are chances of atrocities or exploitation. They cook their food on Chula, using fire wood as a fuel. So, the smoke from burning wood, harms her eyes. Even her lungs are affected and she gets a disease of Bronchitis. There is adverse impact on her health.

No doubt, after Independence, there has been more literacy among tribal women. But, the school dropout ratio after Std. VII in Primary level, is much higher. Among those who discontinue their studies, 90% of them are girls.

The Government provides fairly good facilities for education. They provide text books and education material, scholarships / Freeships, free transport, Mid-day meal, cycles for school going girls in secondary schools etc. Despite all these positive efforts, no substantial outcome in girls' education can be witnessed.

The infrastructure facilities in schools are very poor. Repairs and maintenance are main problems. Of course, grants are provided as per norms, but reality is something different. This surely affects literacy rate. It is necessary that more motivating efforts be made to attract the girls to continue in the system in sustained manner.

The tribal women work very hard since childhood. She is subjected to physical loss. She becomes old in very young age. Early marriage, more number of children, physical labour work etc. affect her health. Besides, she is subject to reproductive diseases. Other diseases like sickle cell, Thelematia, Mal nutrition, Ovary-cancer, T.B., Hiv-A-Aids etc. also could be seen. Above all, she is not prepared to take proper medical treatment.

The tribal woman in interior or remote areas still resorts to the Dai or Nurse for her delivery at home instead of institutionalised delivery. The place is not hygienic. Besides, she has not availed of Immunisation facilities, during her pregnancy period. She doesnot consume nutritious food during pregnancy or after child birth. Instead, without even taking proper and adequate rest, she joins the work-force. All these factors affect her health severaly. Both poverty and ignorance are the main causes for this. The pregnancy / delivery at a young age could also be one more factor for her poor health.

The tribal women engaged in construction work on road side or in building works are often subject to sexual explvitation by truck drivers, supervisors, contractors etc. Such exploiting being un-safe sex, can result in STD^s or HIV/Aids.

An Educated Tribal Woman :

An educated tribal woman is socially and economically empowered due to her education. She is urbanised. Of course, the percentage of such women will be less. It would be an interesting study to find out how many tribal women got higher / professional education, how many of them could find better placement in Government or in technical field or in Corporat Sector ? How many of them made their place in Politics or in Social World ? Such a Study can throw light on many myths and bring out facts.

For empowerment of (even educated) tribal woman, it is necessary to provide then knowledge about legal provisions. She must be aware of her rights and duties. She must have common knowledge about equal wages for equal work, PESA, FRA, Child Marriage Restract Act, Domestic Violence Act, Atrocities Act etc etc.

She must also be aware about role of Police, Judiciary, Taluka-District Courts, Free Legal Aids, 33% reservation in municipalities and Panchayats at all levels. She must have basiy knowledge about ITDP, TASP, Tribal Sub-plan, procedure for budget formulation budget discussion and budget appovel and Vote on Account. We have been celebrating International Day for Women. Can we now concentrate on such a day for our Tribal Women, in order to really empower them ? We have in India 10,42,81,034 tribal people and almost 50% of them are tribal women. Now therefore it is high time that we make efforts to empower them- the last one among them. The 73rd and 74th Amendment acts were indeed the landmark acts in the direction of women empowerment; but the process of empowerment will be incomplete without thinking about our poor, literate low-literrute tribal women and make them aware about their rights and responsibilities. The development and empowerment process for tribal women will necessarilly be different than mainstream process. Therefore, it is necessary that we make efforts to identity the plan of action for tribal communities in general and tribal women in particular. The concept of 'Self-Rule' envisaged in 73rd and 74rd Constitutional Amendment Acts and concept of specific role of Gram Sabha under PESAAct of 1996 are land mark legislations and have far-reaching impacts on empowerment at grass root level including those in tribal areas.'PESA' provisions have a special value for tribal world. It has recognised the traditional values and have given it a modern touch.

Strengths and Weaknesses :

Tribal Community loves nature. For them, the wind, the air, the water, the land etc. are Gods/Goddesses. Land is worshipped as Land God. Forest is worshipped as Forest-God, similarly, a mountain is also God, a village is also a Protector-God. When it protects, it doesnot care for one's own life. There have been different customs in respect of birth, death, marriage etc. The Caste-Panh assumes special significance. They have their own legal and judicial system. The family system is both patriarchal and Matriarchal. Their religious faith also includes faith in life after death, (i.e. re-birth), Ghost, witch, Pishach etc. They believe in Bhagat-Bhuva and he is their chief religious head and a consultant. This is true even in 21st century's India. However, the urban tribal is somewhere out of it.

The social structure cannot be changed unless there is improvement in level of education. Since, literacy rate is low among tribals, their economic system is also backward, and under-developed. They live a life which is rather incomplete or faulty. It is necessary that they should be well-oriented about various social legislation, so that they can attain social development. In fact, there have been special provisions made for them in our constitution e.g. Article 46 provides that the State will protect the tribal communities from Social injustice and all kinds of exploitation through special legislations. It also provides that the State shall will give special incentive, for protecting their educational and economic interests.

Enabling Provisions for self-rule :

Article 275(1) provides that special funds will be provided for welfare of S.T. In reality also, Government of India has allotted hugh funds to many states for undertaking welfare activities in the States where there is more population of tribal area.

Articles 330,332,355 provide for reservation for S.T. condidate in partiament and in Legislative Assemblies and in employment also.

Article 224(2) of 6th Schedute provide for an autonomous District Council and also for councils at regional/State level. This is a provision, whereby self-rule for tribal communities is ensured and their, shape of development will also be decided by

themselves. Under this Article 244(2), a special unit has been constituted for the people of that area e.g. the Khasi, Jaintiya hills, Garo hills, North Kachar hills, Mikir Hills etc. in Assam have been provided with the autonomous district councils. The decentralisation of the Panchayati Raj Institutions through 1992-93 Panchayati Raj Act and the emergence of Gram Sabha as a decision taking body was indeed an inspiring force for a grass-root level bodies. The reservation of seats for Women at Local Government level could positively enhance the participation of women in political bodies 'PESA' was extended to the scheduled tribe areas after the recommendations of Dilipsinh Bhuriya Committee. The provisions contained in PESA - legislation seem to be realisation of the principles propounded by Late Prime Minister Shri Jawaharlal Nehru. Under PESA, Gramsabha is considered to be a basic unit and that has resulted in active Participation of village people in their development programmes, and more and more rural people could participate at the level of planning and monitoring of development works. Now all the development works related to irrigation fishery, cottage industries, water-shed development, social forestry etc. are placed before Gramsabha and are also implemented through Gram Sabha. The District Council has now attained a new height of its status.

The Eleventh Schedule contains the programmes of economic development and social justice. It also includes the subjects like healthcare, providing and maintaining of educational institutions and services, developing infrastructural services and encouraging the development activities etc.

The Atrocities Act, 1989 provides for asserting of Human Rights for Tribals. Now, the right of habitation of tribal on forest land is once again accepted with legal protection. This Act has a potential to provide self-respect to tribal communities.

New Initiatives :

The Tribal Research and Training Institutes have been established in each of the State having intensive tribal population for their better progress and development. There are 18 such TRTIs in India. A new Tribal Research & Training Institute has been started in Andaman-Nichobar Island; which is the centrally administered Area. These Institutes undertake research studies and provide training on the aspects of social, educational cultural and health issues of tribal communities.

For the sustainable development of tribals, a number of programmes and schemes are formulated for individual or community benefits under appropriate constitutional provisions. A Maharashtra pattern was introduced in Maharashtra and the New-Gujarat Pattern was introduced in Gujarat in 1998. Likewise, the Central Government Scheme like Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme was found beneficial to the tribal communities. Besides, the Government of India have decided that instead of providing the foodgrains or other items of day to day living or services at concessional rates through the public distribution system, the subsidy will be provided in cash directly to the beneficiaries. The scheme is likely to be applicable since 2014 in all districts of India. The Food Security Act, 2011 is already in force. The Act envisages to fulfill the responsibility of the State to provide two square meals a day to non-tribal and tribal families residing in backward areas in any of the States of India. It is hoped that the Act will be able to address to the problem of malnutrition in tribal areas

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee (MMREGA) Act and Forest Rights Act (FCA) have certainly contributed towards improvement in socio-economic condition, of tribals. The Acts have surely checked the problem of migration in search of employment. Nevertheless, the problem of mal-hutrition in tribal areas is still persistant.

At Global level a number of Seminars and meetings were conducted on the theme of "Food FOR ALL" and a number of efforts were made to successfully and efficiently address the issue of hunger from the world; but the ground reality is that as on to-day 8 crores of people are victimos of hunger and/or mal-nutritia in the world. The obvious reason is the people donot get food at reasonable cost. One of the reasons is an artificial stor tage of food-grains in the market, to-gether with, inadequate overage family income. The ill-health can be attributed to the poverty, inadequate supply of food grains, lack of saritation facilities, inadequate supply of safe drinking water etc. All these factors effect the individual and social infrastructure (Brokar G; Health in Independent India. MOH, GOI).

A number of studies undertaken in India indicate that majority of our people suffer from under-hutrition or mal-nutrition. As many as 14000 children become blind

every year in India due to lack of Vitamin 'A'. Similarly, the death rate among children in 0.5 age group due to lack of proper nutrition is also high in India. The problem of malnutrition or under-nutrition is found more in tribal areas, rural areas or in Urban slums. This is substantiated by a number of research studies. The under-nutrition among backward and tribal areas also result in inadequate resistance and vulnerability to easy infection. The diseases due to Viral infection and water-borne diseases are not uncommon in these areas. Skin diseases are results of lack of safe drinking water. (R. Rajlaxmi; Appropriate Nutrition.). It was pointed out in the report of Rural Health Statistics of India, 2005 (Govt. of India) that at least 559 crores of people were suffering from Mal-nutrition. There could not have been any positive substantial change in this situation in last eight years. The deplorable health conditions of the tribal communities in the tribal areas of various states of India, can be attributed to major causes such as poverty, lack of adequate food, clothing, absence of safe-drinking water facilities, migration, lack of opportunities for permanent source of employment. Social customs and mis-beliefs etc.

The tribals habitating in forests and hills areas are deprived of social, economic educational facilities as well as wholesome nutritious food. They are not the people complying to the definition of 'Health' propounded by WHO.

As per UNICEF annual report, 2011, at least 9,00,000 children die year; which means that at every minute, more than one new born child disappears from our sight, surely the reasons could be

- lack of whole-some and nutritious food
- Infection in lungs
- Lack of Immunisation
- Lack of adequate Health care facilities and lack of adequate Health care services.

It is very well said that Prevention is better than cure; but what do we see here in tribal areas ? Even as on to-day, the tribals depend more on Bhagat-Bhuva and Gods-Goddesses rather than on consulting a doctor during serious illness. They depend more on herbal medicines available from the forests. No care is taken for Nutritious food, sanitation facilities, Immunisation etc during pre-birth period, during pregnancy or even during post-delivery period; and the health/medical facilities are availed as an excep-

tion rather than a rule. We saw earlier that millions and Billions of Rupees have been provided during each five years plan. The greatest question that we can ask ourselves is that how come, despite the expenditures of this tune over sixty years have not shown positive results in the sphere of Nutrition ? Why So ?

In India, one woman in every 1000 cases of pregnancy, meet with death. Frequent pregnancies is also a cause of higher maternal death rate. According to one study, 10.7% mother die due to illegal and unsafe abortion. In a time of very critical conditions of child in womb, thousands of tribal women resort to treatment by traditional Bhagat-Bhuva, instead of seeking hi-tech hospital facilities. During adolescence, the boys and girls do not get nutritious wholesome food. Even balanced diet is not possible for them. A large number of tribal women and girls suffer from Anemia due to lack of iron in blood. Tribal people are necessarily labourious class; but they do not get appropriate and adequate food to meet with the depreciation in human body due to excessive labour work. Consequently they get untimely oldness or blindness. Women are illiterate and unaware about health hazards and therefore, there are large number of reproductive diseases among young women.

A under-nutritiated mother gives birth to a child who is also suffering from under-nutrition. The Society and the nation at large get the women, child and family suffering from under nourishment. Such a child does not grow healthy. In order to address the issue of under/mal-nutrition, social awareness is necessary. Simultaneously, the education should also be expanded in terms of coverage and intensity. The pattern of education in tribal areas should be nature-specific, region-specific and health-specific. It should also be considered that the adherence to addiction of liquor in tribal areas cannot be free from health-hazards for their children and women; directly or indirectly. Large number of tribals habitate in forest areas. Most of them are non-vegetarian. Often they consume raw meat or meat of dead bodies. This can be injurious to health. Most of the skin diseases and ophthalmic diseases can be attributed to such unsafe and infectious food. The highest number of victims of mal-nutrition in a particular tribal was found at 92.9% (Gameti Ajeet, p.20, Aadilok, issue November 2012)

Prof. R.B. Lal in his study report "Problems of Nutrition among Mandas and Oraons" has observed that the lack of nutritious elements in tribal people is rampant.

Health depends on good wholesome food; but the poor tribals cannot afford good, wholesome healthy food due to poverty. In most of the tribal states of India, rice and meat/fish is a common item of regular food. In addition, they also consume beans, Urad, Kalathi, Bodi, Barai and Rahar etc. In most of the cases, they produce relevant crops on their own land, as far as possible. Additional crops can be sold in the market and encashed. But when they try to encash more crops in the market, they, to that extent, sacrifice their own personal consumption, resulting into under nutrition.

Strategy for Health Care :

In order to ensure that the development and empowerment does not become victim of under nutrition of tribals, several schemes have been formulated and programmes launched to reach health services to the interior and remote areas. The target is to provide one sub-centre for 3000 population and one P.H.C. for 20,000 population and one CHC for 90,000 population as well as a Referral Hospital with in-door facilities alongwith a Laboratory with modern facilities, X-Ray Machine, Sonography Centre etc. have been arranged. Free-of-cost facilities for Immunisation, for protection against diseases for children and T.B., cholera have been provided. Under ICDS Programme, the pregnant women and feeding mothers, as well as young babies are provided with supplementary nutrition, health facilities etc. In the State of Gujarat, under “Sanjeevani” Scheme, 250 ml. of milk is provided to school-going children free of cost.

India is weeded to the principle of “Health for all”. Every year alongwith WHO, it celebrates Universal Health Day, wherein intensive health programmes including Breast Feeding Week, Re-productive health education for adolescent girls, maternity and child welfare have been celebrated. Obviously the topics cover the critical issues of tribal health as well. Government of India and several health-prone NGOs make intensive efforts for health care and development for tribal people. The Programme like development for tribal people, the programme like Mid-day Meal in the Primary Schools has been effective and useful to growing children in protecting them against malnutrition or under-nutrition.

A healthy citizen is a valuable asset for any nation. The deprivation from proper nutrition for any individual or a community definiely result adversely against one’s

efficiency and productivity. It blocks the progress of a person. How can we afford a kind of situation, wherein the tribal communities are deprived of food especially when we are talking about their empowerment, and also when, we have already enacted the food security Act ?

Empowerment How, why and when ? :

People's participation is necessary for sustainable development and empowerment of people. The national unity and integrity can be ensured only when each of its citizen participate in the process of nation building activities. The voice of each section of the society-women, men, children, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, minorities, rural masses, urban slum dwellers should be reflected in the process of development. In India, 8.6% of its population is made of tribal people (2011). Therefore, their voice, their representation, their participation in the process of nation building becomes all the more imperative.

Our constitution has provided for many supportive, protective and defensive provision for development of tribal people and many legislation have also been enacted to transform these provisions into reality. Still to-day, the tribal people are the part of deprived section, of the communities, even after 66 years of independence, Shri Virgeneous Saksa, Deputy Director, Tata Institute, Gowahati has attempted a study and revealed that it is not a proper idea of development for tribals wherein they live in different kind of socio-cultural conditions but the formula for their development is prototype. He clearly meant that we must work out different strategies for development for different tribes; and such strategies should be community-specific, culture-specific and conditions-specific.

In India, we have 10,42,81,034 schedule tribe people. The population is second largest in the world. Their rate of growth between 2001 to 2011 remained 23.07%. The growth rate in Urban areas is more than in rural areas; which is obviously due to migration from rural areas to Urban areas. Alongwith number of people, the number of problems have also increased. The main issues before them is migration, unemployment, nutrition, poverty etc. All these issues are closely co-related. They donot get adequate opportunities of employment, hence they migrate to other places in search of work.

They are poor, and hence poorly-fed and suffering from mal nutrition. Tribals migrate to urban centres, because they donot find the conditions in their native place whereby they can own the resources of production and have control over them. When they migrate to Urban centres, the place is alien, unknown, having no contacts and hence having no voice. Obviously, they suffer from inferiority complex and become vulnerable to exploitation. In such conditions, they are not able to participate and contribute in the process of nation building and become responsible for increase in Urban poverty.

The contribution of tribals in national agricultural production is also not noteworthy. The reason is obvious. They hold small units of land. They deploy very orthodox traditional technology, manure, seeds, irrigation and non-mechamised instruments. The production being very low, its contribution is just nominal.

The level of migration in labour force is 7% in organised sector and 93% in non-organised sector. (2011). The tribal labourers fall in unorganised sector. They work on construction sites, road construction work etc. They are unskilled labourers, and are employed on piece meal work. Consequently, they earn less woges and they are subjected to risks as well.

Tribals migrate both at inter- district level as well as inter-State level. The migration is transitory, temperory. They are deprived of facilities such as Aadhar Card, Ration Card etc. Women are usually working with their male partner. Being legally ignorant and illiterate, they cannot avail the benefits of minimum wages. Since, they have to wander here and there in search of work, their health-risk increases. Such unhealthy women cannot contribute in nation building process.

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act has provided for 33% reservation of women at local self Government level; but all women cannot avail the political benefits from it. Women have multy-fold responsibilities - towards one's children and family etc. In a partiarch pattern of Society, woman is a great sufferer. It can be said without any risk that tribal women have hardly any voice in integrated development process.

We are indebted to tribals :

Despite these conditions, we can still proclaim that tribals have contributed substantially for the development of nation. In fact, they have sacrificed a lot for our nation;

for which we are ever indebted to them. Even since the movement of independence, they have sacrificed their habitation, their land and their most valuable resources, without asking for any reward of recognition. It should also be not forgotten that such sacrifice has created many socio-economic problems for them.

Interestingly, the tribal family and tribal community is really socialist in its practice. Both men and women in tribal societies have equal rights. The essence of male-female equality is more found in tribal communities. Though traditional in living, they reflect modern ideology and modern principles in reality. And, it is not artificial. It is their way of life.

Besides tribal people are not self-centred. One observes closely the methodology of construction of houses, programme of community-hunting, celebration of festivals, celebration of birth, marriage or death ceremonies, one will find that all tribal people are very much co-operative in nature (Nayak Thakorebhai, Pandya Girish, 1980 P. 226). Limited to their physical needs for family or for hunting. Their economic system is deficit-budgeting system and their techniques of production are traditional and primary. But being co-operative and friendly, they help each other physically and financially. The currency and coins were not in practice for many decades. Besides, there is no organised marketing system. The weekly Hat Bajar is still in existence.

Now when we make efforts to enjoin tribals into main-stream society, we should never forget that their socio-economic aspects are distinct and that we have to take a serious note of it. Even for sustainable development of tribal societies, these socio-economic aspects need to be taken into account.

The Socio-economic problems have adverse impact on tribal societies. Most of these problems can be enunerated as an illustrative (and not exhaustive) list :

- Illitaracy - poverty - Unemployment - Addiction
- Un-ambitious nature - Child labour - Exploitation
- Land Allienation - Atrocity - Migration - Displacement
- Adverse sex-ratio among 0.6 age-group.
- Encroachment of non-tribals (Tribalisation),
- Tribal girls getting married in non-tribal families.

Vicious Circle :

All these problems have been closely co-related. They have cause-effect relationship. Tribals are considered to be a labour class. Their income-level is low. Most of the tribal people are poor. Most of these families are under debt. Due to this, they are exploited by money lenders. This can even result in Alienation of lands as has happened in past. The simple tribal lets go his right on land, hand them over to the money lender and would like to be relieved of burden of loan. A tribal, though is farmer; is not able to take adequate crop for his livelihood. On one hand, land has a pivot place in his life. On other hand, he is deprived of his land due to debt. If snatched away, he will become poorer. Poverty and illiteracy are also co-related and there is vicious circle explaining the cause of poverty. His agriculture problems are often related to geographical conditions.

A Sociologist Dr. Dubey notes that the tribals donot get adequate employment at his place. Both the traditional and new emerging economic system can provide employment only for some time, say only for some part of the year. When he doesnot get employment, he has to resort to incur debt. Hence, there is clear vaccume of a system of effective infrastructure which can provide employment during the period of scarcity. In absence of such a system, tribals become easy prey of greedy money lenders. Once they incur debt, they continue paying interest continuously for many years. The problem is not unknown to anybody; but the mearures taken have been cursory and scarce. Even a prosperous farmer can become an agricultural labourer if he incurs debt. In 1991, we had on record 30424433 farmers; which reduced to 13397077 in 2011. Meaningthereby, there was a clear loss of 17027365 farmers during 20 years period. This is alarming figure. One has to think for its solution. Once a farmer ceases to be a farmer; he because an agricultural labourer; and has to incur debt for social customs. Even the commission agent collects his commission for taking him to the money lender.

There are co-operative credit societies and also nationalised banks in tribal areas, but they extend loans only for productive purposes. They donot provide loans for social customs or for livelihood. Besides, a lot of paper work is required, forms are to be

filled up; sureties are also to be provided, evidences of holding of property and their valuation etc. are required to get loans from banks. The tribal being ignorant and illiterate fears all such formalities.

Vidyarthi and Ray notes that in tribals areas, the son gets debt from the father in heritage. But Amarkumar Singh throws light on another aspect of tribal reality. He states that in some of the States, non-tribal youth marries a tribal bride; and acquires land as a tribal and thereafter leaves the tribal woman aside. This is clear atrocity on tribals. The tribal youth should be oriented with proper legal provisions to fight such mishaps.

Illiteracy is another stumbling block in the process of tribal development. The level of illiteracy among tribals was 52.9% in 2001; which has reduced to 41.4% in 2011. But more women are illiterate than men. Besides, the literacy rate is not common in each State. Similar difference is found among men-women illiteracy in different states. Again, more literacy is found at Primary education level which gradually declines when you go up. It is very much less at college level. In Mala pan dram and Suhang tribes of South India, hardly any one is literate, whereas in lusai tribe, the literacy rate is 40%.

Illiteracy is a complex of conduct of illiterate people. Therefore, illiteracy is a social problem. Lack of literacy - reading, writing and arithmetic - deprives a person from acquiring modern thoughts; scientific knowledge etc. Therefore, illiterate people are more governed by customs and traditions. They do not accept new values and cling to old conventions. They have blind faith. Such illiteracy results in more deprivation for tribal people.

Government have introduced a number of schemes for literacy among tribals and have provided various incentives. But, tribals have given more importance to non-formal education rather than formal. The problem of illiteracy among tribals can be attributed to their traditional occupation structure, children's participation in occupational activities, poverty, indebtedness, lack of literacy among woman and migration.

The socio-economic problems among tribal grow-up due to migration. As seen earlier, the main causes of migration are poverty, lack of employment opportunities, reservation policy, development programme, and education as well. But because of migration, they incur debt for livelihood. Money lenders are still active in interior areas,

despite extension of co-operative credit societies. The moneylending Act, 1975 had made many persons free from debt; but unfortunately, we can find some tribals paying as much as 50% to 100% rate of interest to the money lenders. As per one survey, in 1975-76 only 14.4% tribals were under debt; which rose to 34% in 1982-83 and it could have still increased by 2013. This is very hard reality of life of tribals.

Tribals celebrate the social events like birth, marriage, death etc. by even incurring debt if they do not have money to spend. Even addiction to liquor makes them incur debt. They hardly have any sense of savings. According to one report of Planning Commission, 72% of tribals under their study were found incurring debt from non-institutional sources. That is why, Bhupendra Singh mentions that it is utmost necessary to do away with the limitations and defects from development-oriented schemes and also in the Acts related to Money lending.

Land Alienation issue is directly related to conditions of debt. In fact, incurring of debt is not a problem but a consequence of a problem. Tribals mortgage their land and take debt. If he is unable to repay the money in time, the money lender, with the help of fraudulent tricks, takes away the land of illiterate tribal, preparing documents of sale-deed. (as if the tribal has sold his land to the money lender). Thus an illiterate tribal person loses his land and all his rights on land are now transferred to Money lender.

In fact, acts were made during British rule and there were provisions that the land of a tribal cannot be transferred to a non-tribal. Then after independence also, we framed special legislations to such effect. But, unfortunately, the acts remain in the Statute book and land alienation activities continue in one way or the other. Now of course, it can be said that under the provisions of the Forest Rights Act; now there is a situation in which non-tribals have stopped grabbing of land from tribals. The legal provision is crystal clear; and there is no permission granted in any case. Earlier Dhebar Commission had also made useful recommendation in respect of transfer of land.

Vidyarthi and Ray notes that there have been restrictions imposed on mortgage of land by a tribal in name of non-tribal, to gift the land in name of non-tribal, to lease the land etc. They further add that migration creates its own problem and it results in

exploitation of tribals. Thus, we find variety of condition regarding Socio-economic conditions of tribals.

The Problem of Tribalisation has spreaded upto non-tribal areas; and through out the nation. Just to take benefit of schedule tribe, a tribal girl is accepted in marriage; for which several tricks are played. The non-tribals wish to become schedule tribe people; because they want to avail at the benefits which are legally available to schedule tribe beneficiary.

In most of the cases where a tribal girl is married to a non-tribal family, the tribal girl is exploited. In fact, it is not a marriage per se, but the trading of a tribal girl.

The sex-ratio in 0-6 age group among tribals in last two decades is a matter of great concern. The number of births for girls is on constant decrease. One has to give a thought of its social consequences in future.

In case of migration of tribal families in search of work, the 'push' factor is forceful. That is, the migration, though voluntarilly, is due to lack of opportunities for employment at home front. Migration itself is a problem, but several other problems are also associated with it. These problems are both micro and macro-starting from the easily morning toilet activity to late night sleeping issues.

In our opinion, the social issues are more critical than economic one, among tribal society. These social issues can be prevented by social empowerment of tribals through bringing awareness and consciousness in tribals; wherein role of media can be more useful.

Role of Media :

In traditional tribal society, mostly residing in interior hilly areas; the means of communication were drums, trumpet, flute, arrow and dress-code Gradually, they were substituted by electronics instrucments such as radio, television and mobile phones. Besides, newspapers, pamphlets, leaflets, banners, hoardings etc. have also played significant role. The place of film-shows also was note worthy. These media aim at providing information, propagation and entertainment. They indeed can become useful sources for bringing social change among tribals.

The level of education can be upgraded through meaningful and imaginative use of media. The education ministry, GOI, publish very useful educational material and developmental information, which can be disseminated in interior tribal areas through the use of electronic media like T.V., Radio etc. in shorter span of period. The illiterate parents can be involved in communication process through the use of effective photo graphs and films. The increase in literacy rate of tribal woman and their emancipation from the social bondage or religious stiffness can be credited to means of communication. The written information has a limited use only for a few literate people; but the audio visual information by radio, T.V. through public or private channels go a long way upto illiterate masses.

The health-information can be easily transmitted in less time, through electronic media. e.g. seeing a film star 'Amirkhan' as a brand ambassador of the campaign 'Remove Mal-nutrition' appeals even to tribals in interior areas. Similar way, other campaigns for development schemes can be launched in such imaginative way. 'Eradication of Polio' campaign with Amitabh Bachhan as its brand ambassador effectively appealed the tribal masses, seeing him in posters or on the screen.

The Advertisement on T.V. or films have played great role in bringing change in fashions and adoption of cosmetics by tribal youth. The tribal youth in interior areas of Dangs, Valsad or Panchmahals no longer is found with his half-dhoti or loin-cloth, but he now puts on Jeans and Jersey. Likewise, young girls have adopted Punjabi dress. But the impact of means of communication are not only bliss-ful. They have negative impacts as well. If a tribal youth, in search of prosperity rushes to urban centres, he can meet with the frustration of hard realities as well. Similarly, under the impact of cheap Ads, the youth is attracted towards easy money and become prey of sex work and get ruined by STDs and HIV-Aids.

Thus, the use of media has to be imaginative and positive. One can easily make its use to inform outside world about tribal people, their life, style, their language and dialects, their cultural heritage etc. The love for nature' imbibed by tribal communities can be propagated in main stream societies so that they can also develop genuine love for nature.

Let them enjoy, but let them not be nuisance :

The development programmes for tribals can become successful if they are planned and implemented in a way to raise the respect for tribal culture individually and collectively. We cannot bring the mainstream society to the tribal primitive society, but we can definitely appeal them to develop respect for nature, environment and simplicity. Likewise, let the tribal places be developed as picnic spots, but such development should not be harmful to concerned tribal communities. We have to learn as how to keep a balance between modern and traditional, between destructive development and sustainable development. To cite an example, all hilly areas or natural resorts are now flooded with visitors. This can add to the income of local residents to substantial amount, but such income is earned at the cost of forests and its pure unpolluted environment or at the cost of real natural peaceful surroundings. Can you label it as development ?

The tribals have been habitating in valleys of hills in interior forests. The places have plenty of natural resources. The tribals have consumed these resources for their livelihood, but have also protected them with care. In fact, they have developed their life-style in a way so that the basic values of nature and its wealth is not adversely affected. They love nature and they protect it with their integrity. We cannot underestimate the role played by these tribal communities throughout India in protecting natural resources. Even if they have consumed them, they have done it with a sense of discretion. And simultaneously they have worshipped them with great devotion !

We have dense forests in our North-East States or in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand. We have beautiful hilly series of Nilgiri in South, as well as hilly series of Satpuda, Aravalli etc. in Gujarat, Rajasthan and Maharashtra. All these places have plenty of natural resources. Together with it, there is a vivid and colourful culture of tribals in these areas. The integration between man and nature creates a beautiful combination which is very attractive. Such an atmosphere can provide real peace of mind.

The tourists visit the places in North-Eastern States to enjoy the natural beauty of forests, mountains, valleys and rivers. Their visits can generate income for local tribals and the local products of forests or those of cottage industries/handicrafts get an

exposure to outside market. Besides, due to contacts with outside societies, there is definite scope for interactions in occupational world. In short, such visits can lead to economic growth. On social front, the tribals get in touch with mainstream population. Watching their fashionable designs and styles, they are also tempted to imitate such fashionable styles. Not only this, often they watch these persons and the facilities, amenities, liberties available to these people; and sometimes, they get dissatisfaction about their own life. This is not a general trend; but the point is that such things can happen. The tribals often think of migrating to Urban centres in search of such comfortable or luxurious life.

The development of picnic spots or resorts at the places of tribal habitation has sometimes resulted into sexual exploitation, atrocities, rape, addiction to liquor etc. Such evils are mostly direct outcome of development of resorts. Besides, the trends in life style undergo change. The rich cultural heritage, which was inherent part of their life now becomes a marketable product. The dance and songs which were spontaneous in their times are now items to attract the outsiders ! The art and culture now are no longer the intrinsic talents but are window-shopping articles ! Their essence and souls are gone !

Therefore, this aspect of tourism should not be ignored. Let the interior tribals earn more income; let them have inter-actions with an outside world, let them sell their goods and products but their social life should not get disturbed; their value system should not be dis-integrated and their social identity should be respected and maintained.

Tribal Literature :

Let us peep into tribal literature. For each community and each society, literature is a reflector of values. It reflects the inner-most of people. Along with language, the dialects are equally important and along with songs, the folk-songs are equally important. The language/dialect that the tribals use is somewhat different than one used by mainstream population. Similarly their folk-literature is also different reflecting their social, religious and cultural heritage.

The tribal folk-literature has many facets - the folk songs, legends, proverbs, marriage songs, morning songs, mourning songs, birth-day songs, songs to be sung on

6th day of the birth of a child, fairs songs and festival songs. The songs reflect their socio-cultural values, their hopes and aspirations, their frustrations and failures etc. Often, some songs get us oriented to forest herbs. Their idioms, proverbs are most meaningful.

In order to highlight the tribal folk-literature, several Tribal Research and Training Institutes in various States have undertaken several studies. In Gujarat, Shri Acharya Shanti has worked on Bhili dialects. The Adiwasi Academy, Tejgadh has compiled the folk literature of tribals in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra under the language project of Sahitya Academy. This is useful not only for tribals but to all classes of people.

Language indeed is an important factor in strengthening folk-literature. Somehow, we have developed an apathy towards Tribal dialects and have not been able to benefit from its very rich, precious, valuable heritage.

India is a country of rich varieties of geographical and cultural history. There are 658 tribes habitating in various parts of India. They speak different languages and use different dialects. You will not find a single language / dialects spoken in a single district. Such varieties are also among tribal dialects. Language and dialects are stronger media of self-expression and inter-action.

Several recommendations are on record to preserve tribal cultures, languages and dialects. Main among them are to be found in Dr. Verrier Elvin Committee report, Renuka Ray Committee report, Dhebar Committee report etc. But the question of medium is indeed a problem. As seen earlier, tribals express themselves through their dialects. There are certain dialects being used by many people, but some other dialects are used by only local few. Gondi, Santhali, Mundari, Khasi and Bhili dialects have been used by lakhs of people.

The educationalists suggest to provide education through mother tongue, this being important from the child's cognitive development point of view. But, this is not followed in practice. One of the observations for drop out by tribal children is that the language the teacher speaks in the classroom is not properly followed by tribal children. (cultural Psychology, Urmiben Desai).

Language is an inherent part of culture. The folk tales, folk-songs, legends, proverbs, quiz, puzzle, riddle etc. have been preserved in their peculiar dialects. It is

difficult to transcript them in other languages. The tribals are proud of their own language and dialects; and would like to express themselves in their own difects. But gradually, they have accepted regional language as their other language. To-day 59 tribes use two languages for their effective expression. As per 1981 census, there were 14 tribal dialects. More than 70% tribals use that language having Indo Iron languages e.g. Bhili, Halbi and Hajong. In Dravidian family, there are 11 languages spoken by 20% people. These languages are khond, kisan, korwa, Badaga, Tuda, Kota, Khond, Gond, Maler etc. These 11 languages have been made use of by 40,60,000 people. (1981 census). In Nishad family, there are 14 tribal communities, being used by 80,00,000 tribals of 14 tribes. The Kirat language family includes 54 dialects - being used by more than 40 laks people. The language include Boda, Bhotiya, Dafla, Garo, Lasai, Mishmi, Naga, Kuki etc.

As such 22 main languages have been registered as authorised tribal languages. In Indian the tribal dielects are vivid. In all language families, we find tribal dialects. More than 40% of tribals have still preserved their own original languages / dialects. Some tribals speak their own dialect as well as the language of the region, which is a non-tribal language. Their adherence to their own language has given boost to the progress. But there are also examples where the adherence to one's own language has created problems and conflicts. Due to such rigidity, they are deprived of general progress; find difficulties in getting educated, in critical cricumstances like famine, calamities etc., they are not able to migrate to other places or other states to earn livelihood, cannot explain one's pains to other and thereby even have to face death. During great epidemis, they are not able to avail of the benefits of health schemes of India; because if the person who can cure, could be from other place and cannot understand one's difficul-ties and it becomes difficult to diognise and treat the patient. Because of limitations of expression, they cannot have enough and adequate control over programmes.

Tribals are found talking primary level education, but in higher studies or in technical/professional courses; they are not much in number. Language could be one of the factors responsible for their less number in higher education. Same way, women are found indifferent to education, perhaps due to difficulties of language. One who doesnot know other language; becomes prey of inferiority complec, and cannot avail more infor-

mation. Lack of knowledge of other language is responsible to make tribals lack in well-versed in legal awareness.

Conclusion :

Thus, Government of India makes very sincere efforts for allround development of tribals, but due to limitation of linguistic abilities, the tribals are not able to extend their full-fledge participatia or noticeable contribution.

While talking about empowerment, we can not think about lop-sided emphasis. Only through holistic attitude the real empowerment can be a reality. So far as tribal communities are concerned, they have immense internal capacities and lost of resources. In that way, they are already empowered. We, those who work for tribals, should now realise that, the quantum of ignorance is more with us, rather than with them. Realising this hard fact, we have to march ahead in our task of extending our helping hand in their process of wholesome empowerment.

Thank you and Jay Hind.

FERERANCE

BOOK:

- (1) Upadhyay C. (2009), "Tribal: Traditional and change", Dr. Chandrakant Upadhyay, Ahmedabad. (Gujarati)
- (2) Bhowmik K. (2005), "Status and Empowerment Tribal Women in Tripura", Kalpaz Publications, Delhi. (English)
- (3) Dash S. K., (2012), "Political Empowerment of Tribal Women", Sonal Publications, New Delhi. (English)
- (4) Desai U., "Cultural Psychology", Rachana Publication, Ahmedabad. (Gujarati)
- (5) Jain T., (2011), "Empowerment of Tribal Women in Urban Development", Minarva Publication, Jodhpur.
- (6) Kumar M. (2007), "Education and Modernization in Tribal Society", Classical Publishing Company, New Delhi. (Hindi)
- (7) Rao S., (2013), "Impact of SHGs Activities on Empowerment of Tribal Women", The Associated Publishers, Amberla. (English)
- (8) Raval C. (2012), "Gender and Development", Parshv Publication, Ahmedabad. (Gujarati)
- (9) Shah A. G. and Dave J. K., "Sociology of Tribal Society", Anada Publication, Ahmedabad.
- (10) Sharma S. and Sharma R. K. (2005), "Women Empowerment and Political Schemes", Ritu Publication, Jaipur.
- (11) Varma S. B., Singh S. K. and Singhala V. K. (2011), "Rural Agriculture Marketing", University Publication, New Delhi. (Hindi)
- (12) Varma S. B., Singh S. K. and Singhala V. K. (2011), "Rural All-Round Development", University Publication, New Delhi. (Hindi)
- (13) Varma S. B., Singh S. K. and Singhala V. K. (2011), "Rural Gandhian Thought", University Publication, New Delhi. (Hindi)
- (14) Varma S. B., Singh S. K. and Singhala V. K. (2011), "Rural Health Care", University Publication, New Delhi. (Hindi)

- (15) Varma S. B., Sinh S. K. and Singhala V. K. (2011), "Rural Tourism and Travel", University Publication, New Delhi. (Hindi)
- (16) Varma S. B., Sinh S. K. and Singhala V. K. (2011), "Rural Water Management", University Publication, New Delhi. (Hindi)
- (17) Varma S. B., Sinh S. K. and Singhala V. K. (2011), "Rural Women Welfare", University Publication, New Delhi. (Hindi)
- (18) Varma S. B. Soni, M.L. and Gupta S. (2005), "Women Awareness and Empowerment", Avishkar Publishers : Distributors, Jaipur. (Hindi)
- (19) Thakar M. (2004), "Tribal Development and Forest", University Granth Nirman Board, Ahmedabad. (Gujarat)
- (20) Tyagi S. B. (2011), "Fundamental Aspects of Women Empowerment", ALP Books, New Delhi. (English)

MAGAZINE :

- (1) Vichar, October - December, 1998
- (2) Adilok, July - August, 2012
- (3) Adilok, September - October, 2012
- (4) Adilok, November - December, 2012
- (5) Adilok, September - October, 2013
- (6) Arthsankalan, 2013

WEBSITE :

- (1) www.censusindia.gov.in
- (2) www.tribal.nic.in
- (3) www.ncsc.nic.in
- (4) www.mospi.nic.in
- (5) www.socialjustice.nic.in
- (6) www.labour.gov.in
- (7) www.data.gov.in