

STATUS OF SCHEDULED TRIBES IN INDIA

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Abstract: The Scheduled Tribes are tribes notified under Article 342 of the Constitution, which makes special provision for 'tribes, tribal communities, parts of, or groups within which the President may so notify'. There is no definition of a tribe in the Constitution but one may distinguish some characteristics that are generally accepted: self-identification, language, distinctive social and cultural organization, economic underdevelopment, geographic location and initially, isolation, which has been steadily, and in some cases, traumatically, eroded. Many tribes still live in hilly and/or forested areas, somewhat remote from settlements. Many stereotypes flourish about the tribal persona and tribal society. Many of the tribal people are undeniably economically under-developed, and the process of their marginalization can be traced to the intrusion of British colonialism, which quickly detected in the forest that was home to tribals, great potential for appropriation of resources. Exploitation of forest-lands by both the British and the zamindars resulted in the clearing of huge tracts for commercial crops such as tea, coffee and rubber and allowing contractors to fell trees in the very heart of the forest. These actions deprived the tribal people of their livelihoods because many of them were hunters and gatherers of forest produce. The interaction with the outside world brought the tribal people face to face with problems they were not equipped to cope with, such as alcoholism and sexually transmitted diseases. In the post-Independence period, while the Constitution protected the rights of the Scheduled Tribes and accorded them reservation in the legislature, educational institutions and government jobs, other 'development' activities, such as the construction of large dams or the sale of timber, led to the further marginalization of some tribes. This study tries to show the real status of Scheduled Tribes in India.

Keywords: tribes, economic condition, vulnerable social groups and literacy.

I. INTRODUCTION

Inclusive growth is the essence of developmental strategy across the economies. Since the introduction of economic reforms in early nineties, there has been greater focus of development and planning towards enhancement of human well-being and reduction in inequalities along with growth of per capita income especially targeting vulnerable social groups, viz. STs, SCs, etc. This well-being encompasses individual attainment in the areas of education, employment, health care, nutritional level and amenities like electricity, water supply, sanitation, housing, etc. besides guaranteeing them their civil rights and protection Against atrocities or crimes. Article 366 (25) of the Constitution of India refers to Scheduled Tribes as those communities, who are scheduled in accordance with Article 342 of the Constitution. This Article says that only those communities who have been declared as such by the President through an initial public notification or through a subsequent amending Act of Parliament will be considered to be Scheduled Tribes.

Article 342 provides for specification of tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities which are deemed to be for the purposes of the Constitution the Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State or Union Territory. In pursuance of these provisions, the list of Scheduled Tribes are notified for each State or Union

Territory and are valid only within the jurisdiction of that State or Union Territory and not outside. The list of Scheduled Tribes is State/UT specific and a community declared as a Scheduled Tribe in a State need not be so in another State

II. DEMOGRAPHIC STATUS OF SCHEDULED TRIBE POPULATION AND ITS DISTRIBUTION IN INDIA SCHEDULED TRIBES

Article 366 (25) of the Constitution of India refers to Scheduled Tribes as those communities, who are scheduled in accordance with Article 342 of the Constitution. This Article says that only those communities who have been declared as such by the President Through an initial public notification or through a subsequent amending Act of Parliament will be considered to be Scheduled Tribes. Article 342 provides for specification of tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities which are deemed to be for the purposes of the Constitution the Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State or Union Territory. In pursuance of these provisions, the list of Scheduled Tribes are notified for each State or Union Territory and are valid only within the jurisdiction of that State or Union Territory and not outside.

The list of Scheduled Tribes is State/UT specific and a community declared as a Scheduled Tribe in a State need not be so in another State. The inclusion of a community as a

Scheduled Tribe is an ongoing process. The essential characteristic, first laid down by the Lokur Committee, for a community to be identified as Scheduled Tribes are:-

- a) Indications of primitive traits;
- b) Distinctive culture;
- c) Shyness of contact with the community at large;
- d) Geographical isolation; and
- e) Backwardness

Tribal communities live, in various ecological and geo-climatic conditions ranging from plains and forests to hills and inaccessible areas. Tribal groups are at different stages of social, economic and educational development. While some tribal communities have adopted a mainstream way of life, at the other end of the spectrum, there are certain Scheduled Tribes, 75 in number known as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), who are characterized by:-

- a) Pre-agriculture level of technology
- b) Stagnant or declining population
- c) Extremely low literacy
- d) Subsistence level of economy

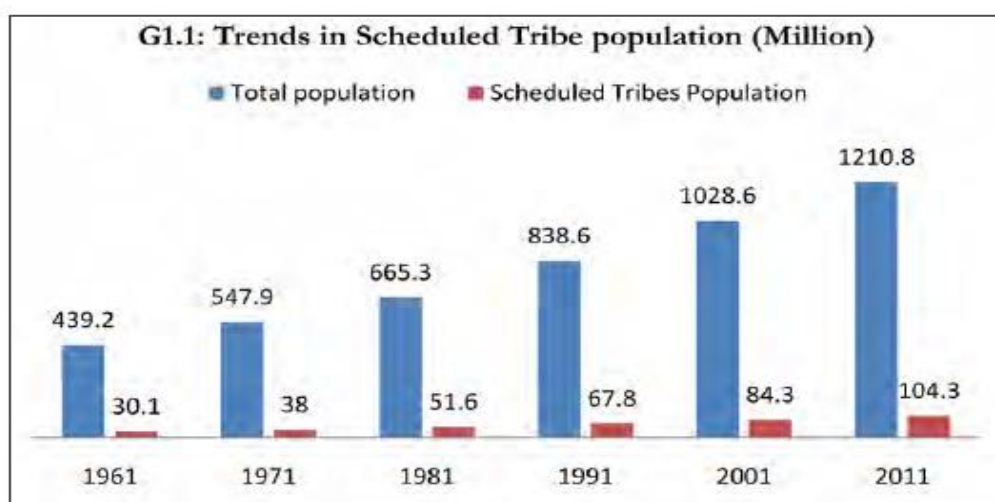
III. DISTRIBUTION OF TRIBES IN INDIA

The Scheduled Tribes are notified in 30 States/UTs and the number of individual ethnic groups, etc. notified as Scheduled Tribes is 705. The tribal population of the country, as per 2011 census, is 10.43 crore, constituting 8.6% of the total population. 89.97% of them live in rural areas and 10.03% in urban areas. The decadal population growth of the tribal's from Census 2001 to 2011 has been 23.66% against the 17.69% of the entire population.

The sex ratio for the overall population is 940 females per 1000 males and that of Scheduled Tribes 990 females per thousand males. The trend in ST population since Census 1961 is illustrated in below the table S1.1. From 30.1 million in 1961, the ST population has increased to 104.3 million in 2011.

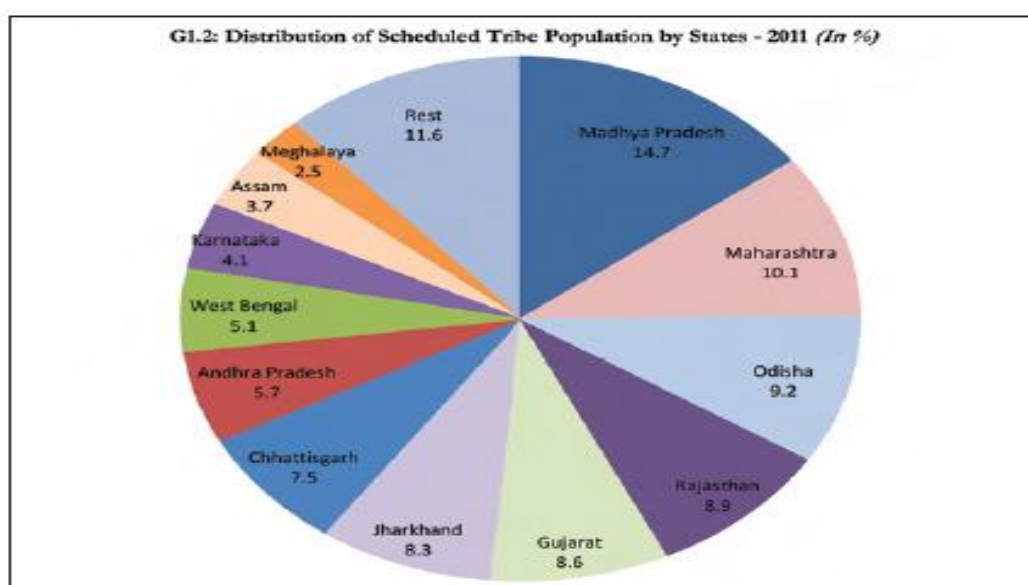
S 1.1: Trends in Proportion of Scheduled Tribe Population			
Census Year	Total population (in millions)	Scheduled Tribes Population (in millions)	Proportion of STs population
1961	439.2	30.1	6.9
1971	547.9	38.0	6.9
1981 #	665.3	51.6	7.8
1991 @	838.6	67.8	8.1
2001 \$	1028.6	84.3	8.2
2011	1210.8	104.3	8.6

Excludes Assam in 1981 @ Excludes Jammu & Kashmir in 1991
\$ The figures exclude Mao-Maram, Paomata and Purul sub-divisions of Senapati district of Manipur, census 2001,



In 1961 STs Population was 30.1 million but it three fold in 2011 Census.

State-Wise Demographic Status Of Total Population & St Population



Sources: presentation of "SCHEDULED TRIBES IN INDIA, census 2011" by registrar general of India may 2013.

Above the graph shows the State-wise Demographic status of Total Population & ST Population (Census 1991, 2001 & 2011), their decadal growth from 2001 to 2011 & the Proportion of STs to the state & to the country's total Population.

Broadly the STs inhabit two distinct geographical areas – the Central India and the North- Eastern Area. More than half of the Scheduled Tribe population is concentrated in Central India, i.e., Madhya Pradesh (14.69%), Chhattisgarh (7.5%), Jharkhand (8.29%), Andhra Pradesh (5.7%), Maharashtra (10.08%), Orissa (9.2%), Gujarat (8.55%) and Rajasthan (8.86%). The other distinct area is the North East (Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh).

IV. EDUCATION STATUS OF SCHEDULED TRIBES' IN INDIA

Education forms an important component in the overall development of individuals, enabling them to greater awareness, better comprehension of their social, political and cultural environment and also facilitating in the improvement of their socio-economic conditions. These hold true in the case of the Scheduled Tribes in India. This study compiles the present and comparative literacy and level of education of the Scheduled Tribes in India.

Literacy Rate (LR) of Total and ST Population during 1961-2011

Literacy rate (LR) is defined as percentage of literates among the population aged seven years and above. Although literacy levels of STs have improved, the gap in literacy levels, both for tribal men and women, has not declined significantly. In fact the gap increased between 1971 to 1991, falling thereafter, to a little above the 1971 level. S2.1 below illustrates a comparison between the literacy rates of the Total population and the STs, from Census 1961 to Census 2011.

For the Scheduled Tribe Population in India, the Literacy Rate increased from 8.53 percent in 1961 to 58.96 percent in 2011 for STs While the corresponding increase of the total population was from 28.30 percent in 1961 to 72.99 percent in 2011 (S 2.1 and the graph). LR increased by 11.86 percentage points from 2001 to 2011 for STs and 8.15 percentage points for total population.

S2.1: Comparative Literacy Rates of STs and Total Population (in per cent)						
Category / Census Year	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Total Population	28.3	34.45	43.57	52.21	64.84	72.99
Scheduled Tribes	8.53	11.30	16.35	29.60	47.10	58.96
Gap	19.77	18.15	19.88	22.61	18.28	14.03

S2.2: States having ST literacy rates less than country's average for STs		
S. No.	State/UT	Literacy Rate
	India	58.96
1.	Andhra Pradesh	49.2
2.	Madhya Pradesh	50.6
3.	Jammu & Kashmir	50.6
4.	Bihar	51.1
5.	Orissa	52.2
6.	Rajasthan	52.8
7.	Tamil Nadu	54.3
8.	Uttar Pradesh	55.7
9.	Jharkhand	57.1
10.	West Bengal	57.9

Source : Census 2011

Ten states having Literacy Rates less than country's average (58.96 %) for ST population in Census 2011 are indicated above S2.2.

V. SCHEDULED TRIBES STATE WISE LITERACY IN INDIA AS PER 2011 CENSUS

In figures,

S. No	State /UTs	Total			Rural			Urban		
		Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female
1	Andhra Pradesh	49.2	58.3	40.1	46.9	56.1	37.7	66.8	74.7	58.7
2	Arunachal Pradesh	64.6	71.5	58.0	60.4	67.7	53.3	84.6	90.3	79.4
3	Assam	72.1	79.0	65.1	70.9	78.0	63.8	90.0	93.7	86.3
4	Bihar	51.1	61.3	40.4	50.3	60.7	39.5	65.3	72.5	57.6
5	Chhattisgarh	59.1	69.7	48.8	57.6	68.4	47.1	76.9	84.9	69.0
6	Goa	79.1	87.2	71.5	78.4	86.4	70.7	80.2	88.3	72.7
7	Gujarat	62.5	71.7	53.2	61.3	70.7	51.8	72.7	80.0	65.1
8	Haryana*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	Himachal Pradesh	73.6	83.2	64.2	73.0	82.7	63.4	87.4	92.5	81.9
10	Jammu & Kashmir	50.6	60.6	39.7	49.1	59.3	38.3	71.7	79.6	62.6
11	Jharkhand	57.1	68.2	46.2	55.2	66.6	43.9	75.4	83.2	67.8
12	Karnataka	62.1	71.1	53.0	59.0	68.5	49.4	74.8	81.9	67.7
13	Kerala	75.8	80.8	71.1	74.0	79.3	69.0	90.4	92.7	88.2
14	Madhya Pradesh	50.6	59.6	41.5	49.3	58.4	40.1	66.7	74.0	59.2
15	Maharashtra	65.7	74.3	57.0	63.2	72.2	54.1	80.3	86.1	74.1
16	Manipur	77.4	82.1	72.7	75.9	80.8	71.1	87.7	91.6	83.9
17	Meghalaya	74.5	75.5	73.5	71.0	72.2	69.8	91.3	92.3	90.3
18	Mizoram	91.5	93.6	89.5	84.5	88.6	80.2	97.9	98.4	97.5
19	Nagaland	80.0	83.1	76.9	76.0	79.5	72.4	92.6	94.6	90.6
20	Orissa	52.2	63.7	41.2	51.1	62.7	39.9	69.1	77.7	60.5
21	Punjab*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
22	Rajasthan	52.8	67.6	37.3	51.7	66.7	36.1	69.0	81.0	55.6
23	Sikkim	79.7	85.0	74.3	77.5	83.2	71.4	89.2	92.9	85.6
24	Tamil Nadu	54.3	61.8	46.8	51.3	59.0	43.6	69.1	75.4	62.7
25	Tripura	79.1	86.4	71.6	78.4	86.0	70.7	92.2	94.8	89.7
26	Uttar Pradesh	55.7	67.1	43.7	54.5	66.2	42.3	67.0	74.8	58.0
27	Uttarakhand	73.9	83.6	63.9	72.4	82.5	62.0	88.3	93.7	82.6
28	West Bengal	57.9	68.2	47.7	56.7	67.2	46.2	71.2	78.4	64.0
29	A & N Islands	75.6	80.9	69.9	74.2	79.8	68.2	95.2	98.0	92.6
30	Chandigarh*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
31	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	61.9	73.6	50.3	58.5	70.8	46.3	79.5	88.0	71.1
32	Daman & Diu	78.8	86.2	71.2	79.6	87.5	71.7	78.0	85.0	70.7
33	Delhi*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
34	Lakshadweep	91.7	95.7	87.8	91.5	94.7	88.3	91.8	96.0	87.6
35	Puducherry*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	India	59.0	68.5	49.4	56.9	66.8	46.9	76.8	83.2	70.3

Source: Registrar General of India, Census 2011

VI. STATUS OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AMONG SCHEDULED TRIBES IN INDIA

In India, the essential data/information on health and family welfare, needed for policy and programme purposes and on important emerging health and family welfare issues is obtained through the National Family Health Survey (NFHS). The NFHS is a large-scale, multi-round survey conducted in a representative sample of households throughout India, under the stewardship of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and obtains information on fertility, infant and child mortality, practices of family planning, maternal and child health, reproductive health, nutrition, anaemia, utilization and quality of health and family planning services.

Infant and Child Mortality

Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) is defined as the number of infant deaths in a year per 1,000 live births during the year. Child mortality is defined as the number of deaths of children fewer than five years of age but above one year of age in a given year per one thousand children in this age group. Neo-natal Mortality Rate is the number of deaths within one month of birth in a given year per 1000 live births in that year and Post-natal Mortality Rate is the number of deaths of children between 28 days and one year of age in a given year per 1000 total live births in the same year. Peri-natal Mortality Rate includes late foetal deaths (28 weeks gestation & more) and early neonatal deaths (first week) in one year per 1000 live births in the same year.

As per NFHS-3 estimates, the under-five mortality rate and the child Mortality rate are much higher for STs than any other social group/ castes at all childhood ages (95.7 and 35.8 respectively). However, it is found that STs have a lower infant mortality rate (62.1) than SCs (66.4) but higher than OBCs (56.6). Even the pre-natal mortality rate for STs (40.6) is lower than other social group/ castes (Table 3.1 below).

Some of the key health indicators as per NFHS-3 (2005-06) in the country are:

S3.1: Key health indicators as per NFHS-3 (2005-06)			
	SC	ST	Total
Infant Mortality	66.4	62.1	57.0
Neo-natal Mortality	46.3	39.9	39.0
Pre- natal Mortality	55.0	40.6	48.5
Child Mortality	23.2	35.8	18.4
Under five Mortality	88.1	95.7	74.3
ANC Checkup	74.2	70.5	77.1
Percentage Institutional Deliveries	32.9	17.7	38.7
Childhood vaccination (full immunization)	39.7	31.3	43.5

Source: National Family Health Survey (NFHS) 2005-06

According to Census 2001, the Infant mortality (IMR) and the under 5 mortality rate (U5MR) for STs is highest in Madhya Pradesh (110 and 169 respectively per 1000 live births) followed by Arunachal Pradesh (104 and 158 respectively per 1000 live births). There is a significant gap in the IMR and U5MR in rural and urban areas in almost all states and UTs. Compared at country level, the IMR and Under 5 Mortality among STs is much higher than to that of SCs (ST- IMR 84 and U5MR 123 and SC – IMR 77 and U5MR 111)

Poverty among Scheduled Tribes

The impact of various poverty alleviation programmes put into action during the last two developmental decades has, no doubt, brought down the poverty levels among STs from 51.94 percent in 1993-94 to 45.86 per cent in 1999-2000 in rural areas and from 41.14 per cent to 34.75 percent in urban areas over the same period. But, it is much higher when compared to 27.09 per cent in rural and 23.62 per cent in urban areas in respect of general categories during 1999-2000. Therefore, there has been an increasing unrest amongst the tribes and also in tribal areas in the recent past. Radical/Extremist

movements are already operating in some parts of the country; the root cause for all these is the perceived dissatisfaction with the existing conditions and failure to receive benefits and facilities promised to them. Therefore, there is an urgent need to critically review the approach adopted so far for tribal protection and development, and reorient the same, wherever needed, so as to ensure flow of development

Benefits within a definite time-frame and restore the faith of the tribes in the capability of the government to deliver.

VII. SCHEMES FOR THE PROSPERITY OF THE SCHEDULE TRIBES

For the development of Schedule Tribes special central Assistance grant has been released under 275 (11) article of Indian constitution investment share, price support, village train Bank scheme etc. are introduced besides this National schedule Tribe financial and development corporation was established with 500 crore authorized capital. Integrated are developments and modified as are development were introduced.

The following are important land marks in Tribal development:

- A) Programmes were designed with as special fusion ST's (1951)
- B) Adoption of Panchasheel principles for process of Tribal development
- C) Opinions of multi-purpose tribal development blocks for intensified development of ST's 1961
- D) Introduction to strategies of TSP and SCA for Tribal development 1974
- E) Expansion of infrastructure facilities for poverty alleviation in 1985
- F) Setting up of Tribal cooperative marketing, development federation 1987 and finance development Corporation in 1989.
- G) 73 & 74 amendments and panchayath extention to scheduled areas Act.
- H) Sections up on separate ministry of Tribals 1999 and National schedule Tribes finance and Development Corporation 2001.

Some other Measures for the prosperity of Tribes:

Many programmes helped Tribal to improve their socio-Economic conditions. The following are some of them

1. Strict implementation of reservation of seats in public sector employment
2. Proper looking into reservation of seats in institutions of higher learning
3. Formulation of proper welfare schemes for prosperity of Tribes based on fact data.
4. In private sector also these should be reservations for schedule tribes
5. The present 7.5 percent reservation for government services should be increased whenever necessary.

VIII. SUGGESTIONS

- 1) Develop a comprehensive policy on tribal development, which derives inputs from people at the grass root level to ensure sustainable development that is ecologically sound, people oriented, decentralized and culturally acceptable.
- 2) Encourage need-based economic activities that use locally available raw materials and assist in marketing of finished goods.
- 3) Empower tribes at village level to participate effectively in Gram Sabhas, by promoting community based organizations.
- 4) Provide more budgetary support to the land purchase scheme.
- 5) Include tribal culture, traditional knowledge systems, tribal history and vocational skills training in the school curriculum.

- 6) Conduct a rapid survey of the health status of the tribes and prepare region-specific and tribe-specific health plans.

IX. CONCLUSION

Indian Scheduled Tribes are the group of tribal communities and was given the name Scheduled Tribes during the post-Independence period, under the rule of Indian Constitution. The primary criteria adopted for delimiting Indian backward communities as Scheduled Tribes includes, traditional occupation of a definitive geographical area, characteristic culture that includes a whole range of tribal modes of life, i.e., language, customs, traditions, religious beliefs, arts and crafts, etc., archaic traits portraying occupational pattern, economy, etc., and lack of educational and economic development. The central government and state governments have initiated schemes for betterment of scheduled tribes but still all programs are not reaching effectively to the tribes hence, government should take concert decisions to make them effective and some more programs are to be introduced for betterment of Scheduled Tribes in India.

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