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# Tribal Sub-plan Strategy in Andhra Pradesh

**Palla Trinadha Rao**



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RESEARCH UNIT FOR LIVELIHOODS AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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CENTRE FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STUDIES

Begumpet, Hyderabad-500016

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**Palla Trinadha Rao**

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

BE	:	Budget Estimate
CDA	:	Community Development Approach
Cr.PC	:	Criminal Procedure Code
CSS	:	Central Sector Scheme
CSTC	:	Central Standing Tripartite Committee
DTG	:	Dispersed Tribal Group
FDC	:	Finance and Development Corporation
GCC	:	Girijan Cooperative Corporation
GDA	:	Girijan Development Agency
GO	:	Government Order
GoI	:	Government of India
IKP	:	Indira Kranthi Patham
IMR	:	Infant Mortality Rate
ITDA	:	Integrated Tribals Development Agency
ITDP	:	Integrated Tribal Development Projects
MADA	:	Modified Area Development Approach
NDC	:	National Development Council
NSS	:	National Sample Survey
PESA	:	Panchayat Raj Extension to Scheduled Areas
PESA Act	:	Panchayat Extensions to Scheduled Areas Act
PO	:	Project Officer
PRD	:	Panchayat Raj Department
PTG	:	Primitive Tribal Group
RE	:	Revised Estimate
SC	:	Scheduled Caste
SCA	:	Special Central Assistance
SCSP	:	Scheduled Caste (Component) Sub Plan
SLSTC	:	State Level Standing Tripartite Committee
SMPTB	:	Special Multipurpose Tribal Blocks
SMTDP	:	Special Multipurpose Tribal Development Projects
ST	:	Schedule Tribe
SWD	:	Social Welfare Department
TCRTI	:	Tribal Cultural Research & Training Institute
TDA	:	Tribal Development Agency
TDB	:	Tribal Development Blocks
TDD	:	Tribal Development Department

TPMU	:	Tribal Project Management Unit
TRIMCO	:	Tribal Mining Cooperative Societies
TRIPCO	:	Tribal Power Companies
TSP	:	Tribal Sub Plan
TWD	:	Tribal Welfare Directorate
UT	:	Union Territories
VO	:	Village Organisations
VSS	:	Vana Samrakshana Samithi
VTDA	:	Village Tribal Development Associations
WPR	:	Work Participation Rate

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## 1. Historical Steps in Tribal Development Policy and Law

The tribal people living in their remote hills and forests led a life of their own for many centuries, generally uninfluenced by the main currents of developments outside. It was with the entry of the missionaries into these areas that the officers of the Administration started paying some attention to them. If the Administration contributed to the difficulties of the tribal people by its policy of isolation, the people of the plains added to the problem by their conscious and unconscious neglect. The program of conservation and preservation of forests resulted in progressive encroachment upon the traditional and customary rights enjoyed by the tribals for centuries past.<sup>1</sup>

### (i) Pre Independent Period: British Policy of Isolation

One of the earliest enactments, The Ganjam and Vizagapatnam Act, 1839, was intended to provide administration of justice, civil and criminal, in the Agency Areas. The Scheduled District Act, 1874, was passed specifying the scheduled tracts, and the local governments were given power to extend the laws in force to any Scheduled District.

As part of Montague Chelmsford Reforms the British Parliament passed the Government of India Act, 1919, declaring certain territories as "Backward Tracts". This step was to show that a specific statutory provision was made to protect the tribals in addition declaring the specific tracts. The administrative authorities working in these tracts passed orders in matters of law and order, and held the right to land wherever necessary.

The policy adopted by the British Government was to isolate the tribal community from the rest of the people and exclude them from the purview of normal administration.

Subsequently the Agency Rules, 1924, were made for the administration of agency tracts of Ganjam, Vizagpatnam and Godavari districts in the Madras Province. Revenue authorities acted as judicial authorities in deciding civil matters. These rules are still in force in the Scheduled Areas of Andhra Pradesh. However, as far as criminal administration of justice is concerned, application of old Criminal Procedure Code (Cr.P.C), 1898, was continued till the direction given by the Supreme Court in WP (civil) No. 324/2004 to the Government of Andhra Pradesh for implementation of the new Cr.P.C, 1973. Due to this order, Agency Courts manned by Executive Magistrates were replaced by Judicial Courts in the Scheduled Areas of Andhra Pradesh.

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission (Dhebar), 1961.

In 1935 the British Parliament enacted the famous Act, viz. the Government of India Act, 1935, in which two areas were created statutorily. The two areas created as per the Act were the “Excluded Areas” and “Partially Excluded Areas” under Sections 91 and 92 of the Act. This approach, namely the “segregate isolationist” approach, had its roots in the Government of India Act, 1870, which intended to specify certain tracts as “Scheduled Tracts”.

The Tribal Areas Regulation, 1359, Fasali, (1949) was made for the better administration of the tribal areas in Hyderabad State. Under these rules, the administration of notified tribal areas was vested with the Revenue authorities, the Panchayat, etc.

### ***Isolation Leading to Exploitation***

This isolationist approach, led to much exploitation of tribals, by non-tribal money lenders, contractors, *zamindars* and middlemen. Secondly, the policy of exclusion of tribals from others resulted in deliberate efforts to prevent the development of communication system with a view to separate the tribals from the rest of the population. The few roads constructed were meant mainly for security purposes. A small number of contractors, officials and business sections, who were allowed to have economic and other relations encroached upon the land and forest resources of the Adivasis and exploited them ruthlessly. This all happened due to lack of specific provisions of law regulating their activities. On many an occasions the tribals rose in revolt and on many an occasions reforms were ordered but all these proved futile.

### ***Change in the Policy***

The policy of isolation was justified on the grounds that their traditional culture ought to be preserved and hence there should be no interference from planners. The Chairman of the Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas (other than Assam) sub-committee, Thakkar Bappa (1941), criticized that the anthropologists wanted them (the tribals) as “specimens in a zoo” so that their academic field-laboratories would always be available. Dr. Verrier Elwin’s name was earlier associated with this approach, though, in fact, he was not an isolationist but advocated the preserving of the salient features of tribal culture. Thakkar strongly advocated that the new democratic state had a responsibility towards the welfare of the tribal people and the development of the tribal areas, however, remote and inaccessible they might be. The recommendations were embodied in Article 46 of the Constitution of India envisaging the anxiety of the state to promote educational and economic interests of weaker sections of the society, particularly the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes. The committee indicated that “unless the attention of the Government is concentrated with special emphasis on the problems of the aboriginals and the needs of the Scheduled Areas there is little likelihood of any development”.

## **(ii) Post Independent Period:**

The Government of India was at first in favour of continuing the policy of isolation. However, the Planning Commission objected to this “as no longer practicable”. The planning machinery felt the need for having a positive policy of assisting the tribal people to develop their natural resource base and evolve a more productive economic life without exposing the schemes to exploitation at hands of economic interests. Another diametrically opposite approach of the isolation was the “policy of assimilation” of tribal culture and population in the mainstream of national life as early as possible.

### ***Policy of Slow and Steady Assimilation: Nehru’s Panchaseel***

Striking the balance between the rival policies, a moderate view was visualized by Jawaharlal Nehru. This was a policy of slow and steady assimilation of tribal culture and life in the national mainstream without disturbing the healthy features of tribal life; moreover, this change should be on their (tribal people’s) own initiative and their willing consent. These Principles are called *Panchaseel*. “People should develop along the lines of their own genius. We should try to train and build up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development. Tribal rights to land and forests should be respected. We should not over administer these areas or overwhelm them with multiplicity of schemes. We should judge results, not by statutes or the amount of money spent, but the quality of human character that is evolved”. Dr. Verrier Elwin agreed with the view of Pandit Nehru which suggests that neither of the policy - of isolation of the tribals - nor dragging them to the mainstream of an outside culture is advisable.

There is no gainsaying the fact that development of the tribals cannot be isolated from that of the general economic development of a community as a whole. “At the crossroads of time the face of the tribal is turned towards integration with other communities, rather than towards isolation or separation. The wind of change is blowing fast, we have only to see that the tribals do not lose their feet on the ground”.<sup>2</sup>

The policy of protection and development is undoubtedly sound in itself, but it remains to be seen whether development is possible without upsetting the harmony existing in the placid tribal life. Preparing the tribal communities for change, making the transition gradual, and giving all possible support for re-organization at the newer level are among

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<sup>2</sup> Sachitananda, Changing Tribes, National Seminar on Tribes and Denotified Tribes, 1964, p.84, in Issues in Tribal Development (1988) by P. Ramayya, Published by Chugh Publications, Allahabad.

the safeguards that need to be given. But the expectation that development will take place without touching the age-old harmony finds little support in history.<sup>3</sup>

### ***Constitutional Safeguards Approach***

The Constitution of the Indian Republic provides a series of safeguards for the tribal people. General and special provisions are also applicable to tribal communities. Namely, there are: Article 15 (prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth), Article 16 (equality of opportunity in matters of public employment), Article 17 (abolition of untouchability), Article 23 (prohibition of traffic in human beings and forced labour), Article 38 (securing a social order for the promotion of the welfare of the people), and Article 29 (protection of the interests of the minorities). These articles of the Constitution, though general in nature, touch the core of the tribal issues and problems.

Economic and political guarantees include: special care for the economic and educational interests of the STs and to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation (Art. 46); special grants for development of STs or Scheduled Areas (Art. 275(i)); maintenance of efficacy of administration (Art. 335); reservation of seats in the House of People, Legislature and Panchayats (Art. 330, 332, 243D); and extension of the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendments of the Constitution to the Scheduled Areas through the provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, to ensure effective participation of the tribals in the process of planning and decision making.

The Fifth and Sixth Schedules of the Constitution were made applicable to the Scheduled Areas and other tribal areas in the country. The President of India at the national level and the Governor at the state level are primarily responsible for safeguarding these provisions enshrined in the Constitution. At the state level, the Governor, and on his behalf, the Chief Minister and other Ministers are responsible for the formulation and implementation of schemes in the tribal areas. The Tribal Advisory Councils and the Tribal Research Institutes help in the formulation of tribal policies and programs. Annual reports are to be submitted by the Governors to the President of India regarding the administration of the Scheduled Areas. Tribal Advisory Councils are required to be set up, especially in Fifth Scheduled states in order to advise on matters pertaining to the welfare and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes (Article 244(1)).

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<sup>3</sup> Kulkarni, P.D., 'Some Problems of Implementation', National Seminar on Welfare of Tribes, 1964, p. 122, in *Issues in Tribal Development* (1988) by P. Ramayya, Published by Chugh Publications, Allahabad.

The control of Legislature over the working of the welfare activities of the tribals is affected by the Parliamentary Committee on Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes, to consider the reports submitted by the Commissioner for SCs and STs under Article 338(2), and report to both the Houses on the action taken by the Union Government and Union Territories.

In addition to these, the Government of India (GoI) and the state governments appoint commissions and committees from time to time to assess and report to the concerned authorities regarding the implementation of welfare schemes and related matters. Every year the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is authorized to lay before the Houses of Parliament the Annual Report. The commission analyses the programs and schemes for tribal welfare and reports to the President. The Ministry of Home Affairs and the Planning Commission also appoint working groups/task forces/committees to study the problems of the tribals.

The scheme of administration of Scheduled Areas under the Fifth Schedule visualizes a division of responsibility between the state and the union governments. The State Government is charged with the duty of screening legislations unsuitable for extension to the tribal areas, framing regulations for their peace and good governance with particular reference to the protection of tribal lands, allotment of wastelands, and protection from exploitation by money lenders. It also has to implement special schemes for the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes living within its boundaries as well as schemes for their general development. The Union Government's responsibility extends to providing guidance in regard to the administration of the Scheduled Areas, and the standard of life of the tribal communities. The Union Government also has the power to give directions to the state governments regarding the implementation of particular schemes, laying down priorities in their implementation and in regard to the general administration of the tribal areas.

Even the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution is not fully operational as yet and this lapse has to be rectified. Further, the design support of the Fifth Schedule will have to be meaningfully combined with the self-management trust of the Sixth Schedule to lend emphases to endogenous growth.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> B.K. Roy Burman, 'Approach to Tribal development: An overview' in Tribal Development in India (1982), edited by Buddhadeb Chaudhuri, Inter India Publications, New Delhi.

## **2. Pre-Tribal Sub-Plan Development Approach**

The First Five-Year Plan, launched in 1951, recognized that communities which suffered handicaps and disabilities needed special attention. The plan's draft outline gives official recognition to Nehru's views when it states, "the conditions are now generally such that there has to be a positive policy of assisting the tribal people to develop their natural resources and to evolve a productive economic life wherein they will enjoy the fruits of their labour and will not be exploited by more organized economic forces from outside. So far as their religious and social life is concerned, it is not desirable to bring about changes except at the initiative of the tribal people themselves and with their willing consent. It is accepted that there are many healthy features of tribal life, which should be not only retained but developed. The qualities of their dialects and the rich content of their arts and crafts also need to be appreciated and preserved".

### **Community Development Approach**

A program of Community Development (CD) Approach was launched during this plan period and the entire country was covered by this approach, including tribal areas.

### **Multi-Purpose Tribal Development Blocks**

It was felt that the tribal areas needed special treatment and hence the existing efforts were sought to be strengthened in 1954 by launching a few Special Multipurpose Tribal Development Projects (SMTDP) covering a few blocks.

The Second Plan was launched in 1956, declaring "For the ST welfare programs...have to be in tune with the *Panchaseel* Principles". An important landmark was the opening of 43 Special Multipurpose Tribal Blocks (SMPTB) later called the Tribal Development Blocks (TDB). Each was planned for about 25,000 people as against 65,000 in a normal block. During this plan period emphasis was laid on the settlement of tribals practicing shifting cultivation in agricultural colonies. These colonies were to be in the nature of multi-purpose projects.

The Balwanthrai Mehata Committee appointed in 1957 recommended the adoption of a revised pattern of program for CD Blocks. The Government of India adopted a revised pattern from 1958 which advocates three stages for each block: 1) A pre-extension stage for one year; 2) Stage I with a budgetary provision of Rs.12 lakhs for a period of 5 years without any distinction between "extensive" and "intensive" stages; 3) Stage II which corresponds to the post-extension stage of the old pattern but with a budgetary provision of Rs.1 lakh for a year.

A Committee on SMPTDB and the Central Advisory Board for Tribal Welfare reviewed in the year 1958, and held that the bottlenecks in the implementation of welfare programs were lack of effective means of communication between the personnel engaged in the development work and the traditional leadership and institutions.

The achievements of these blocks and their effectiveness were further reviewed by the Dr. Elwin Committee (1959). The committee noticed that the MTBs were formed by some state governments against the norm which says that each MTB should form only with tribals whose population was 80 percent of the total. Finally the committee recommended that the new Blocks should not be confined to the Scheduled and Tribal Areas; there should be 55 percent tribal population of the total, with a coverage of maximum 25,000 individuals, in an area of 200 square miles. Based on this recommendation the special multi-purpose blocks were replaced by "Tribal Development Blocks" (TDBs).

The committee (1959) on plan projects headed by Smt. Renuka Ray recommended for economic criteria of assistance to individuals and groups to ensure that the economically less advanced got higher benefits than the better off. The committee recommended a synchronization of the schemes of development for the required period of pre-planning, giving more emphasis to quality.

The Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission appointed under Article 339 of the Constitution of India, under the chairmanship of U.N. Dhebar (1961) reported that the protective machinery for safeguarding the interests of the tribal people and protecting them from exploitation has not functioned properly. The problem of economic development for the bulk of the tribals cannot be solved unless the resources of land, forest, cattle-wealth, cottage and village industries are all mobilised in an integrated basis in its service. Hence, the commission emphasized the thought of rapid integration of tribal people with the general population of this country.

The Dhebar Commission further recommended that the additional blocks in the Third Five-Year Plan period should not be confined to Scheduled Areas only, but should also cover other tribal areas wherever the tribal concentration is 55 or more percent of the total population. That is the reason the scheme of Multi-Purpose Tribal Blocks was extended not only to Scheduled Areas but also to those blocks in which the tribal population comprises two-thirds or more of the population. This was intended for implementation as a centrally sponsored scheme.

The TDBs like the Community Development Blocks were multi-sectoral in approach and were mainly developmental in outlook, lacking in specific administrative perspective

and organization to take care of the specific needs of the tribal population. The TDBs ignored the protective aspects of the tribal's requirements.<sup>5</sup>

The Third Five-Year Plan of the Government of India (1961-66) was directed towards strengthening the agricultural economy and proposed priority to the programs for the economic upliftment of the persons engaged in the shifting cultivation. Formation of multi-purpose co-operatives for meeting the credit requirements of tribal agriculturists and artisans and for marketing their products was intended.

The Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (1960-61) expressed that due to the comparative social, economic and educational backwardness of tribals, they could not possibly catch up with the other advanced communities of India. Hence, special provisions were made in the plan to secure their advancement in such a way as to bring them to the level of the rest of the community.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh (GoAP) issued instructions to allocate 3 percent of the plan budget to TDBs having 25,000 or more population. The Shilu Ao Committee (1969) reported that "even in Andhra Pradesh, the direction...that 3 percent of the total provision of each department should be earmarked for the welfare of the STs has largely been ignored and ...the planners...have proceeded on the basis that the special provision is the only provision available to finance tribal development programs".

The Bhargava Committee (1962) on cooperation for Backward Classes suggested that in every TDB an appropriate number of service cooperatives, forest labour cooperatives, labour contract societies, and marketing societies should be organized; and the programs of these societies should be an integral part of the economic development plan of the weaker sections.

The Lokur Committee (1965) was appointed to advise the government on the revision in a scientific and rational manner of the lists of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The committee suggested that the various castes and tribes should administratively be classified or categorized so as to give high priority for the comparatively advanced.

### **Progressive Advancement with Integration:**

A study team set-up by the Planning Commission under the chairmanship of Shilu Ao (1969) revealed that the amount earmarked for tribals had been diverted for non-tribal beneficiaries. The committee recommended for appointment of special officers to restore

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<sup>5</sup> Ashok Ranjan Basu, 'Tribal Development Administration in India' (1994), Mittal Publications, New Delhi.

the alienated tribal lands from occupation of non-tribals. It also noticed the failure of implementation of the money lending regulations in Andhra Pradesh. The team recommended that TDBs should be enabled to formulate development schemes that suit the wishes and felt needs of the tribals. The program for the tribal development should be based on an “area approach” and should be financed out of the general plan supplemented in suitable cases by a special allocation for tribals. It underlined the necessity for protective legislations to the tribals living outside of the Scheduled Areas.

The entire question of tribal development was broadly divided into two parts: areas of tribal concentrations and dispersed tribal population. Investment in infrastructural development also becomes an element in tribal development. But in the case of dispersed tribals, infrastructural development in areas has to be a part of the general development program. As we move to highly dispersed tribals, they tend to lose tribal characteristics and get assimilated in the mass of the poor, and continue to suffer from some additional social and economic limitations. The loss of command over resources and dispersal itself sometimes results in social regression.

Economists maintained that the policy should, therefore, be to bring about development in such a way that social and cultural disturbances will be at a minimum. But they held the view that “some disturbances are inevitable, but if from the beginning, progress is not conceived as increase in per capita income (however computed), but as a complex of factors including social and cultural changes, then there would be no serious danger of excessive disruption of social life”.

### **Pilot Projects for Tribal Development**

An important step taken during the Fourth Plan Period was the setting up of six pilot projects in 1971-72: one in Andhra Pradesh (Srikakulam), one in Bihar (Chaibasa), two in Madhya Pradesh (Dantewada and Konta) and two in Orissa (Gunupur and Baliguda) as a Central Sector Scheme with the primary objective of combating agrarian unrest and left wing extremism in certain tribal areas of Central India. A separate Tribal Development Agency was established for each project with an allotted Rs.2 crores for economic development and arterial roads. These agencies were later merged with the Integrated Tribal Development Projects under the TSP during the Fifth Plan.

### **3. Profile of Tribals in Andhra Pradesh**

#### **Introduction**

The State of Andhra Pradesh has two distinct regions of contrasting ecological and topographic features: one with plain landscape, and the other with high altitude of hills and forests, the top-elevated Eastern Ghats with cold climate. Andhra Pradesh is the traditional habitat for 35 tribal communities.

Certain communities in the country are listed as Scheduled Tribes in exercise of powers conferred by Clause (1) of Article 342 of the Constitution of India. The Notification of Scheduled Tribes communities are state-specific.

The identification of Scheduled Tribes is done on the basis of following characteristics: (i) primitive traits; (ii) distinctive culture; (iii) geographical isolation; (iv) shyness of contact with the community at large; and (v) backwardness.

However, it was observed that not all these communities were at the same level of development. In fact, there are certain communities which are at a much lower level of development even as compared to the other Scheduled Tribe communities. It was also observed that in the matter of devolution of funds for the development of STs, the major share was taken by those communities which are more assertive and in a better position to demand such benefits. As a consequence, the marginalized STs were left out of the process of development.

In order to ensure the development of these communities, certain groups were identified for the first time in 1975-76 and thereafter in 1993 that were regarded as the poorest of poor amongst the STs and were called Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs). The criteria fixed for identification of such PTGs are: (i) pre-agricultural level of technology; (ii) very low level of literacy; and (iii) declining or stagnant population.

The total tribal population of Andhra Pradesh, according to 2001 Census is 50.24 lakhs constituting about 6.59 percent of the total population of the state. The Scheduled Areas extend over 31,485.34 sq km which is about 11 percent of total area of the state, with 5,938 villages distributed in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Vishakhapatnam, East Godavari, West Godavari, Khammam, Warangal, Adilabad and Mahaboobnagar Districts. Of the 50.24 lakhs tribal population, 130.47 lakhs are found in the above-mentioned nine districts. The remaining tribal population of 19.77 lakhs is distributed in the other districts.

The Government of India has identified three communities namely, Chenchus of Ranga Reddy, Kurnool, Mahaboobnagar, Nalgonda, Prakasam, and Guntur districts in the year 1975-76; Kolams of Adilabad; and Konda Reddis of East Godavari, West Godavari and Khammam districts in the year 1980. In 1982-83, the Government of India recognized the Thotis, Khonds, Porjas, Gadabas, Kondas, and Savaras as PTGs. The habitats of the primitive tribes are located on the hill tops and slopes where plain landscape is totally absent. These tribes are largely dependent on shifting cultivation and minor forest produce collection. The Chenchus are considered to be the most primitive as they are still largely dependent on food gathering activity. At present some of the Chenchus are in a transitional stage from food gathering to food producing. The traditional habitats of the Chenchus are found in the contiguous forest tracts of Nallamalai Hills. Much of the area of the Nallamalai Hills through which Krishna River flows is presently declared as Project Tiger area.

#### **(i) Poverty Ratio**

The head count ratio of poverty measured using NSS Consumption Expenditure Survey data shows that the percentage of poor is much higher among the SC/ST communities indicating wide disparities across social groups in the state. Moreover, the disparity, especially between STs and “others”, has been increasing. Although, the overall poverty ratio and the ratio among SCs and the other social groups shows a declining trend, the head count ratio of poverty among STs has increased from 26 to 28.3 percent between 1993-94 and 2004-05. Most of the increase in the poverty ratio among STs was due to an increase in agricultural labourers among the STs. This indicates the failure of the state’s policy in targeting initiatives and programmes for marginalized sections like the STs and SCs.

#### **(ii) Economic Activity**

##### **● Work Participation Rate (WPR)**

The Work Participation Rate (WPR) is the percentage of workers to the total population. The WPR of the ST population is 53.9 percent according to the 2001 Census, which is almost equal to 54.3 percent recorded in 1991. This shows that there has been no increase at all.

##### **● Employment/Category of Workers**

There has been a decline in the main workers from 93.9 percent during the 1991 Census to 79.3 percent during the 2001 Census. This, in turn, has resulted in a corresponding increase in the marginal workers from 6.1 percent in 1991 to 20.7 percent in 2001. Out of total workers, “agricultural labourers” constitute 49.3 percent, which is significantly higher when compared to 36.9 percent recorded for ST population at the

national level. While 34.3 percent are “cultivators”, 13.5 percent are “other workers”. The remaining 3 percent are workers in “household industry”.

Child labour (WPR of the 5 to 14 age group) was the highest among the STs. Access to land is one of the important indicators of better livelihoods in rural areas. With respect to employment, the percentage of population especially of the ST depending on agricultural labour has increased, which indicates the worsening situation for the STs in Andhra Pradesh.

### ● **Agriculture**

In rural Andhra Pradesh, the predominant occupation for the STs is agriculture. About 90 percent of STs are located in rural areas, and for more than 80 percent of the ST population, agriculture is the principal source of livelihood. About 35 percent of the STs are cultivators. The total irrigable lands are 7.81 lakh acres in the Tribal Sub-plan Areas. However, the government has so far provided irrigation facility to the lands covering an extent of only 1.08 lakh acres.

The decline in the percentage of ST households who are cultivators (45 to 35.4 percent) indicates loss of land resources and increasing dependency on agricultural labour (37 to 43.7 percent). It is to be noted that the percentage of population depending on agricultural labour has increased only in the case of STs.

### **(iii) Literacy and Educational Level**

Literacy and level of education are two basic indicators of the development achieved by a group/society. Literacy results in greater awareness besides contributing to the overall improvement of health, hygiene and other social conditions. According to 2001 Census, the percentage of literate persons (those who can read and write with understanding), aged 7 years and above, among ST population of Andhra Pradesh is 37 percent, which is lower than 60.5 percent reported for state population as a whole.

The female literacy rate of 26.1 percent among the ST population is a matter of concern as almost a fourth of ST females in the state are illiterate. Out of the total literates, 48.3 percent have attained education below primary level. Those who have attained education between primary and middle levels constitute 28.4 percent and 8.5 percent respectively. About 12.3 percent have educational level up to Metric/Higher Secondary levels, implying that every 8<sup>th</sup> ST literate is a Matriculate. Literates with educational level of Graduation and above are 1.8 percent.

Many children belonging to these marginalized communities, especially the STs, are out of school and some are even engaged in economic activities. According to NSSO

estimates, the percentage of ST children in the age group 5-14 years attending schools during 2004- 05, was 80.4.

The incidence of educational deprivation (i.e., percentage of children who remained out of school) is higher among children belonging to STs when compared to “others”.

**(iv) Health**

Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), which is an important indicator in the human development perspective, is highest among the STs (104). Anaemia is another indicator of nutritional status and it usually results from deficiency of iron, vitamin B or other nutrients. Severe form of anaemia was observed among 3.2 percent of the ST women. Another indicator of the health status of the population is access/utilization of health care services; for this the factors considered are: immunization of children and pregnant women, and attention received at the time of delivery. For nearly 62 percent of the ST women, child delivery took place at home.

**(v) Basic Infrastructure**

Mostly the STs are deprived of basic infrastructure. Among other groups and STs, the latter are the worst affected. In ST villages the situation is very bad. About 90 percent do not have tap water, while 67 percent do not have road connection and 73 percent do not have any transportation facility. People living in these ST villages are not connected with the outside world, as there are no proper roads or transportation facilities. Medical services are not available for about 50 percent of the ST villages in AP. The percentage of households without electricity is highest among the STs (64.6 percent).

**(vi) Marital Status**

Marital status is one of the important determinants of fertility and growth of a population. The 2001 Census data on marital status show that 48.7 percent persons among the STs of Andhra Pradesh are “never married”. The “currently married” constitute 46.9 percent while 4 percent are “widowed” and only 0.5 percent are “divorced and separated”.

Marriages of ST girls below 18 years (3.2 percent) are higher than that recorded among the ST population at the national level (2.1 percent). Similarly, the incidence of marriage among boys below 21 years at 3.6 percent is also higher than 2.8 percent aggregated for the ST population at the national level.

**(vii) Tribal Habitats and Economy**

The tribes who live in symbiotic relationship with the nature are the protectors of nature. The economy of the tribals is closely associated with the ecological factors and habitats in which they live.

The tribals and their complete dependence on the immediate environment show their age-old adaptation and harmonious life with their ecosystem. However, they are now being exposed to the outside world and their adaptability is being challenged. Due to the interference of non-tribals and the forest policies and programmes, they are being exploited and alienated. Hence, they are losing control over their environment, and thereby struggling to survive - to collect fuel, fodder and forest produce.

## **2. Problems in Tribal Areas**

The major threat to the tribals is that of displacement: not only project displacement but also resource displacement (land alienation, deforestation, depletion of natural resources, etc.). In Andhra Pradesh, as well as in most tribal areas of India, non-tribal intrusion in the last century has been extremely high. About 50 percent of the people in some parts of the Scheduled Areas of the state are non-tribals controlling more than 50 percent of the lands in spite of tribal protective land transfer regulations that have been in force since 1917, which prohibit transfer of lands between tribals and non-tribals.

Added to resource displacement is project displacement where development projects have threatened the livelihood needs of tribal communities. For instance, there are 18 major dams in Andhra Pradesh and six of the large ones alone have been responsible for displacing about half a million people. The proposed Indira Sagar Project (Polavaram) threatens involuntary displacement of 2.37 lakh people from 276 villages in the Scheduled Areas of Andhra Pradesh - 55 percent of them are tribals. The proposed Polavaram Project will result in the submergence of 94,357 acres of lands situated in the Scheduled Areas, of which 29,852 acres are *poramboke*. In addition to this the Polavaram Project will also submerge 3,223 hectares of forest resources.<sup>6</sup>

The case of Samatha, (a Non-Government Organization) against the State of Andhra Pradesh in relation to permitting a private company for mining in the Scheduled Areas is a classic example of how the state has been violating its own Constitutional duty in the Fifth Schedule Areas. In pursuance of economic development through industrialization, the state has been alienating tribal lands, by permitting private industries and developmental projects like mining, hydroelectric projects, industries and tourism.

The World Bank-aided projects are also displacing the tribals who depend on forest lands for cultivation. The Forest Department, in its Resettlement Action Plan document, claims that with the financial support of the World Bank-assisted A.P. Forest Project, nearly 37,000 hectares of forest under encroachment in the tribal areas of Visakhapatnam

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<sup>6</sup> Trinadha Rao, P. (2005) Nature of Opposition to Polavaram Project, EPW.

have been voluntarily put under productive tree crops by the tribals who had encroached all these lands. Actually, without providing adequate land as compensation, the tribals were evicted under the Project. This is a clear violation of the Bank's own policy towards indigenous people (OD4.30, involuntary settlement).

As commercial interests in land increase, so do forces of land transfers, formal as well as informal. There has been systematic obstruction and efforts at dilution of the full and proper implementation of the Forest Rights Recognition Act, 2006. The recent Forest Rights Recognition Act, 2006, is a central legislation intended to recognize the forest lands already occupied by the tribals and other traditional forest dwellers and access to forest produce for livelihood purposes. There has been a lack of concerted coordination in the implementation of the Act such that the pro-poor outcomes envisaged by the Act may not be widely achieved. It is surprising to note that though the Government has not distributed titles for community forest land claims, 100 titles were distributed to the Forest Department-controlled *Vanasamrakshana Samithis* (VSS) in Adilabad District.<sup>7</sup>

Increased exposure to market forces has resulted in these communities becoming more vulnerable victims, for e.g., in tobacco and cotton cultivation. An evident tension exists between commercialization of agriculture and sustainable agriculture.

The policies governed by these forces militate against the survival interests of the tribals. For example, Andhra Pradesh in its Vision 2020 has identified agri-business, mining development and industrial engagement as the key strategies to be adopted for the development of the state. This is a direct threat to the resource base in the tribal areas of the State.

Then there are the communal forces, which adversely affect the community bond and belief systems of these societies: In AP, religious forces are affecting the community bond and customary law thereby adversely impacting their identity.

There are also the mainstream ideological forces, which affect the self-image of the tribal societies: their needs and aspirations are affected particularly in villages that are exposed to mainstream culture.

Mainstream political parties are affecting the tribal identity and their decision-making process at the grassroots. Intervention with existing or potential leaders through the

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<sup>7</sup> M. Gopinath Reddy, K. Anil Kumar, P. Trinadha Rao and Oliver Springate-Baginski, (2011) EPW April, 2011.

Gramsabhas and the Panchayats is also a challenge. This is especially so in an environment, which is fraught with vested interests from political parties. In the face of divisive forces, to address the identity issue of tribal communities is a challenge.

The Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas Act was brought into force by the Government of Andhra Pradesh (GoAP) in 1998 to empower local bodies as well as the GramSabha. Till Feb 2011, the government did not frame rules; it is expected to take more time to declare villages under the rules, and their implementation.

The committee appointed to make recommendations on Extending Provisions of the Constitution's 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment Act, 1992, to Scheduled Areas (Bhuria Committee) had recommended that "It is note-worthy that some tribal areas in the country are covered neither by the Fifth nor the Sixth Schedules of the Constitution". The process of scheduling was commenced in the fifties and was resumed in the seventies as part of making the Tribal Sub-Plan and Scheduled Areas co-terminus. But somehow, it has remained incomplete, and more than 850 villages, which are to be included in the list of scheduled villages, have not yet been included. During the process of declaration of Scheduled Villages, these villages were neglected, and the concerned file with the government is pending since the last 30 years. The tribals living in these villages are deprived of the constitutional guarantees under the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution.

#### **4. Tribal Development Institutions in AP**

A team of experts headed by R.S. Malayappan was appointed by the Government in 1949 to formulate plans for development of Andhra Agency areas. The committee suggested a network of multi-purpose cooperative societies to purchase minor forest produce from tribals and root out the middlemen's exploitation. The committee favoured an organisation of cooperatives for the implementation of the Land Colonization Scheme, extending credit facilities at a nominal rate of interest, and other services to cater to the day-to-day needs of the tribals. However, the functioning of the multiple cooperatives in the tribal areas did not yield the expected results. In 1957, the Scheduled Tribes' Cooperative Finance and Development Corporation came into existence to operate as a single window for credit as well as marketing. It expanded its operations to the Telangana Region in 1969. The Girijan Cooperative Corporation (GCC) was given development orientation in course of time and developed linkages with credit institutions such as Land Development Bank, District Co-operative Central Banks, etc. The GCC was given monopoly over minor forest produce to avoid the exploitation by middlemen in marketing the tribal minor forest produce collection.

To wean the tribals away from extremism, the Government sanctioned "Girijan Development Agency" with a focus to implement agricultural and allied activities with funds received from the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, New Delhi (Tribal Development Manual).

The Tribal Cultural Research and Training Institute (TCRTI) were set up in 1962-63. Subsequently, a separate Tribal Welfare Directorate from the Social Welfare Wing was created in 1966 exclusively for the upliftment of tribals.

As part of implementation of the recommendations of the Balwanthrai Mehta Committee (1957), four Special Multi-purpose Blocks were established in Andhra Pradesh.

##### **Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDP)**

A group of blocks was considered as the basic unit for planning and development of the new tribal development programs. This unit is known as the Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP).

As per the recommendations of the Dhebar Commission Report, a separate Tribal Welfare Directorate from the Social Welfare Department was created in the year 1966, exclusively for tribals; in order to uplift their economic, educational and social conditions. In the year 1969, as many as 24 Tribal Development Blocks were created, and several Economic

Support Schemes were implemented and placed under the control of the Panchayat Raj Department. On the merits and demerits of the schemes and their formulation and implementation in the Tribal Development Blocks, the Tribal Welfare Department did not have any say.

The group on administrative arrangements and personal policies in tribal areas, headed by Maheswar Prasad (1978), recommended for an integration of administrative units in the area of ITDP to ensure a rational line of command. It suggested few non-monetary incentives for the recognition of the services of the staff.

### ***Integrated Tribal Development Agencies (ITDAs)***

Girijan Development Agency (GDA), a project under central-sponsored Ministry of Agriculture, GoI, was in operation in Srikakulam District during 1972. Perhaps this was created by the Government in consequence of the Naxalite Movement in 1969 in northern Andhra. These GDAs were converted into ITDAs in 1979.

Ever since the beginning of the ITDP during the Fifth Five-Year Plan, the Government of Andhra Pradesh adopted four criteria on the basis of the recommendations made by the Government of India for implementation of the program. They are:

1. Geographical area
2. Concentration of tribal population
3. Level of social and institutional services
4. Rate of development

The ITDAs are in operation in eight districts. Apart from this, there is one ITDA each for the Chenchus and the Yanadis exclusively. Outside the sub-plan area (ITDA areas), There are 10 ITDAs functioning in the state.

At the district level, a Governing Body for each ITDA is formed with all district-level heads of general sector departments as members, and the Project Officer (PO) of ITDA as Secretary.

In order to streamline the administration in tribal areas, Single Line Administration was introduced since 1986. The officers and staff working in the tribal sub-plan areas, connected with regulatory and developmental programs are placed under the administrative control of the PO of ITDA. The Tribal Welfare Department prepares perspective plans for a period of three years for the development of STs under ITDAs, MADAs, Clusters, PTGs and DTGs.

### **Modified Area Development Approach (MADA)**

The Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) areas cover pockets of tribal concentration taking the development block as the back unit. In the Fifth Plan it was noticed that certain areas of tribal concentration outside the TSP area were still left out of the TSP strategy. During the Sixth Plan, it was decided that pockets of contiguous villages/pockets having a minimum of 10,000 population, of whom at least 50 percent belong to Scheduled Tribes should be identified for integrated development. This approach to tribal development which emerged during the Sixth Plan is known as the Modified Area Development Approach (MADA) under the TSP. There are now 41 MADA pockets in Andhra Pradesh.

Still smaller pockets of relative tribal concentration were identified as Tribal Clusters for adoption of MADA for the development of tribals in the MADA and Cluster Areas. There are 17 Clusters in operation. The rest of the tribal population not covered under these projects is covered under DTG projects.

Village Tribal Development Associations (VTDA) are functional committees at the habitation level, formed in 1999 to decide upon development programs on the lines of Gramsabhas. The functioning of the VTDA stands as a counter to the constitutional Gramsabha under the PESA Act, 1996. Again in 2007, instructions were issued to review the VTDA and partner them in all development activities taking place in the TSP areas.

A separate Tribal Project Management Unit (TPMU) was set up under the *Indira Kranthi Pathadam* (IKP) to work under the administrative control of the PO, ITDA. The TPMU's mandate is social mobilization and empowerment of tribal communities in the TSP areas through VOs and federations at the mandal and district levels. The VOs are entrusted tasks including preparation of micro plans, selection of beneficiaries, planning of schemes, etc.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has been promoting Tribal Power Companies (TRIPCO), owned and managed by local tribals, to generate Mini-Hydel Projects and other non-conventional power projects like solar, bio-mass, etc., in tribal areas to ensure further livelihood opportunities. Similarly, the government has also started forming Tribal Mining Cooperative Societies (TRIMCO) to facilitate mining operations in the tribal areas for their socio-economic development.

In the ultimate analysis, the administrative structure can only be a tool to be wielded by autonomous forces; it can be used to promote the urges and the aspirations of the people. In the tribal areas of the country, there have been viable instruments of self-rule

and self-management; some of these are known, while others are yet to be discovered. Our failure to make use of these instruments could be one reason for the tardy socio-economic progress in tribal areas. We should not confine ourselves merely to the higher echelons insofar as representative expression is concerned, so as to administer the development programs in the tribal areas.

## 5. Tribal Sub-Plan Strategy.

*The Sub-Plan must attempt, in broad terms, to address the main issues faced by the tribal communities in these areas. In many cases it may be necessary to look at the problem unfettered by the existing formal procedures or legal frame. The final course may be defined only after fully examining the impact of all the factors on the tribal life. The State must bring up these issues, where necessary, to the Union Government so that they can be considered at the highest level before anything is allowed to stand in the way of fast development of these people.....(Planning Commission).*

### **Evolution of the Concept of Tribal Sub-Plan**

The Fourth Plan met with certain inadequacies and shortcomings in the process of implementation. There was no appreciable progress due to the limited area of blocks, rigid adherence to the schematic pattern in the implementation of the programs and inadequacy of general sector outlays for these regions.

It may be recalled here that the Dhebar Commission and Shilu Ao Committee had recommended socio-economic development of tribals with an ultimate objective to integrate them with the rest of the people in India, within a reasonable time frame. This objective could not be achieved even up to the end of Fourth Five-Year Plan because no special appreciation was made to meet the needs of these communities while formulating the schemes of development.

The Task Force on Development of Tribal Areas (1972) headed by Professor L.P. Vidyarthi viewed that the efforts made for socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes did not bring appreciable change in their condition in the preceding Five-Year Plans. The development of tribals is looked upon as a problem of welfare, as distinguished from development due to lack of proper perspective. The plan programs formulated failed to take into account the actual needs of the tribals. There is a tendency to rely on schematic patterns in tribal development blocks in the place of adopting a flexible strategy suiting the needs of each TDP. This emphasized the need for integrated tribal development.

The expert committee on tribal development headed by Dr. S.C. Dube (1972) also viewed that individual welfare approach and schematic block development approach are inappropriate for tribal areas and an integral development approach should cover the entire tribal area in the country. The committee underlined the necessity of strengthening the traditional institutions to enable them to take up development functions as in the rest of the country. The result of the deliberations of these committees was the birth of Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) strategy.

In December 1973, the Planning Commission issued guidelines to the State Governments on the preparation of sub-plans for tribal regions within the State Plan. The scheme/ programme and projects under the TSP are implemented through Integrated Tribals Development Projects (ITDPs) which were set up in Block(s) or a group of Blocks where ST population is more than 50 percent of the total population.

The twin objectives of the TSP approach are:

- (i) Overall socio-economic development of tribals and to raise them above the poverty level.
- (ii) Protection of tribals from various forms of exploitation.

The Scheme of Special Central Assistance (SCA) to TSP was introduced in the Sixth Five-Year Plan. Under the scheme, assistance is given to State Government as an additive to the State TSP. The SCA forms part of TSP strategy towards the larger goal of enhancing the pace of socio-economic development in most backward tribal areas.

**Essential Features of TSP:**

- (i) To recognize that there is no uniform solution to the variety of problems faced by the tribal regions and communities, and therefore, accept this uniqueness and formulate policies, programs and schemes to suit each individual situation, especially for the vulnerable sections.
- (ii) Evolve appropriate frame for development with emphasis on tribal people at the national and state levels through sub-plan exercise, ensuring adequate quantification from State and Central Plan funds, with budgetary mechanisms (Separate Demand / Major Budget Heads) to ensure accountability, non-divertability and full utilization.
- (iii) Accord highest priority to protective measures for elimination of exploitation of tribal people.
- (iv) Restructure the administrative and institutional setup to suit the local needs and aspirations.
- (v) Supplement state efforts substantially by the Union Government through Special Central Assistance (SCA).

Although tribal sub-plans have projected total investment, a clear perspective about the long-term strategy for the development of these areas with reference to their resource potential has not yet emerged.

In view of this, the long-term objectives have drawn attention to: (i) narrow the gap between the levels of development of tribal and other areas; and (ii) improve the quality of life of the tribal communities. Among the immediate objectives will be elimination of exploitation in all forms.

The flow of funds from the State Plan for the TSP was worked out on the basis of the total population in the Sub-Plan area, its geographical area, and its comparative level of

development and of social services. A special Central Assistance meant to augment the efforts of the state was added to the State Plans on the basis of an accepted formula.

In order to provide incentive for adoption of TSP, it is provided in the guidelines for release of funds under Article 275(1) of the Constitution of India and the SCA to TSP such that an amount equivalent to 10 percent of the total allocation is earmarked and used as an instrument to bring about changes in the institutional framework for adoption of the TSP; this is to be allocated only amongst the states which had released in the previous financial year more than 75 percent of the approved TSP funds to the implementing agencies through the budget head of the Tribal Development Department of the state.

In respect of the Scheduled Tribes, the concept of Tribal Sub-Plan launched in the Fifth Plan is to ensure integrated development of the various Scheduled Tribe communities in the country with the aid of pooled financial resources of the Centre and the States, keeping in view their different economic and socio-cultural background. Special emphasis has to be laid on formulation of appropriate programs and adaptation of the existing programs. **(Indira Gandhi-Prime Minister, March 12, 1980)**

The Central Ministries have a key role to play in case of tribal areas because of the special responsibility of the Central Government under the Constitution, particularly, Article 339. Therefore, the concerned Central Ministries should identify schemes for tribal areas which have relevance to the level of development of these areas and quantify the outlays accordingly. The strategy should be to formulate appropriate programs for both infrastructure as well as those which give direct benefits to the tribal people.<sup>8</sup>

Plan outlay, an outlay equivalent to SC and ST population percentage, i.e., 15 percent for SCs and 7.5 percent for STs, should be set apart and used for programs and schemes related to the development needs and priorities of these two weakest sections of the population. In fact, they would need a larger proportion of the plan outlays that is related to their population-equivalent percentage on account of their historical deprivation, but a minimum of population-equivalent proportion of the plan outlay at least has to be observed. Thirdly, diversion of such funds for other purposes has also to be prevented. **(K.R. Narayanan, Minister of State for Planning, 25th March, 1985)**

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<sup>8</sup> India Planning Commission, October 5, 1982.

Most of the Ministries have not quantified outlays separately for the Tribal Sub-Plan and the Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan. Even those which have quantified outlays have not drawn up need-based programs to re-orient the existing programs to suit the specific developmental requirements and meet the handicaps and problems being faced by the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. The outlays have also been very inadequate in comparison to the magnitude of the problem and the size of the population involved. **(Vishwanath Pratap Singh, Prime Minister, January 12, 1990)**

The Working Groups on the Development and Welfare of Scheduled Tribes during the Eighth Five-Year Plan felt that in the sectoral implementation of the TSP, the schemes under which provisions are made, do not reflect the felt needs of the tribals and therefore do not create the desired impact. The report further lists the different departments over which the Tribal Development Department or Commissioner, or Project Officers, have no control at all.

In view of the above inadequacies and drawbacks in the formulation and implementation of the TSP, the committee appointed by the Government of Maharashtra, recommended in 1992 that the Tribal Development Department should be invested with all the functional powers of the planning department of the State Government so far as the work of preparation of Annual Plan in TSP areas as well as for tribals outside the TSP areas is concerned.

A Standing Tripartite Committee was constituted in the Planning Commission in 1999 to review the implementation of the Special Strategy of SCSP for SCs, TSP to STs and to resolve various policy-related issues in respect of Central Ministries/ Departments as well as State Governments. The Central Standing Tripartite Committee (CSTC) reviews the implementation of SCSP and TSP and guides the nodal Ministries of Social Justice and Empowerment and Tribal Affairs in ensuring the earmarking of funds by the service-oriented Central Ministries/Departments and States/UTs.

#### **Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PTG)**

During the Seventh Five-Year Plan period, the TSP strategy was extended to all the tribals dispersed throughout the country, and individual family beneficiary schemes were made applicable to the dispersed tribals.

The development of tribals had acquired a more realistic touch when it was decided to allocate special funds for the development of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) in the country. The criteria for determining the status of PTGs comprises a low rate of growth

of population, pre-agricultural level of technology and a low level of literacy. In the Working Group Report of the Eighth Five-Year Plan, it has been mentioned that the TSP strategy is a permanent feature now and must be continued.

Although there was some progress as per Human Development Indices in the conditions of the STs, yet the benefits were not percolating to the PTGs. Therefore, in 1998-99, a Special Central Sector Scheme was introduced with the approval of the Planning Commission and Ministry of Finance with the objective to cover those items/activities which, though very crucial for the survival, protection and development of PTGs, are not specifically catered to by any existing schemes - State or Central, or by guidelines governing the utilization of funds under Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Plan and Article 275(1) of the Constitution.

Despite the Government's continued efforts for the development of PTGs right from the Fifth Five-Year Plan, no state government has ever proposed to delete any group from the list of PTGs. This reflects the lackadaisical attitude of the Ministry and lack of commitment to fulfill its objective of bringing the PTGs into the mainstream of the tribal society. The states have not shown any details of separate allocations in their State Plan schemes for the development of PTGs except under the Central Sector Scheme of "Development of Primitive Tribal Groups".<sup>9</sup>

*Before and after Independence, particularly in the context of special provisions in the Constitution for the protection and promotion of the interests of the Scheduled Tribes, various plans and programs were designed to promote their development. One wonders whether the tribal development sector was a laboratory to experiment with different formulae as panacea for their ills. From the strategy of Backward Classes Sector till the beginning of the Fifth Plan relying on flow of benefits from general sectors of development with area-specific approach like Special Multi Purpose Tribal (SMPT) and Tribal Development (TD) Blocks has now reached the Tribal Sub-Plan approach. Since the Fifth Five-Year Plan the emphasis has been on predetermined quantification of funds in identified areas of tribal concentration called ITDP and assured budgetary and accounting mechanism to avoid diversion and lapse of funds. (Report submitted to the Planning Commission "Impact of the Tribal Sub-Plan Implementation in Improving the Socio-Economic Condition of the Tribal People with Special Focus on Reduction of Poverty Level covering the States of Assam and Tamil Nadu", Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi 2003).*

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<sup>9</sup> Report of Standing Committee on Labor and Welfare (2002), Thirteenth Lok Sabha-Ministry of Tribal affairs-Development of Primitive Tribal Groups-28th Report.

In May 2003 the Ministry of Tribal Affairs issued fresh guidelines for release and utilization of Special Central Assistance (SCA) for TSP. The prominent among them are:

- (i) The tribal populations living below poverty line should alone be covered under SCA-financed activities, with special emphasis on raising their socio-economic status to that of the rest of the population in the Blocks/District/State.
- (ii) Adherence to the provisions of the Panchayat Raj Act of 1992.
- (iii) The provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act of 1996 in the planning and implementation of TSP, including the SCA funds, should be ensured in letter and spirit.
- (iv) Before sanctioning the SCA to TSP, it is a pre-requisite to formulate specific schemes/programs that have a direct bearing on the economic development of tribals as suitable to their social, economic and ecological situation.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister while addressing the 51<sup>st</sup> NDC meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2005, emphasized that "Tribal Sub-Plans and Scheduled Caste Sub-Plans should be an integral part of Annual Plans as well as Five-Year Plans, making provisions therein non-divertible and non-lapsable, with the clear objective of bridging the gap in socio-economic development of the SCs and STs within a period of 10 years".

However, the cumulative figures for the years 2002-2003 to 2005-2006 show that the total outlay provided for TSP was Rs.3,09,348.47 and the total expenditure was Rs.2,85,612.98, which is 92.32 percent of the total outlay. The total expenditure under state plan was Rs.44,06,090.24 and the expenditure under TSP was Rs.2,85,612.98; the comparison shows that expenditure under TSP is only 6.48 percent of the expenditure under the State Plan.<sup>10</sup>

Plan allocations earmarked for SCs and STs in the Union Budget continue to be very low and far below what was promised in the Special Component Sub-Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan norms of 16 percent and 8 percent respectively. The proportion of total plan allocation for STs was: 2.80 percent in 2004-05; 3.80 percent in 2005-06; 4.29 percent in 2006-07; 4.89 percent in 2007-08; 4.21 percent in 2008-09; and 4.10 percent in 2009-10.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Executive Summary of the Evaluation Report, "Adoption of TSP Approach in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and MP", Ministry of Tribal Affairs, GoI.

<sup>11</sup> Yamini Mishra and Bhumika Jhamb, "An Assessment of UPA-I through a Gender Budgeting Lens", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Aug 2009.

Changing the design of schemes alone is not enough. Funds have more than tripled in the last ten years for poorer districts, but neither the GoI nor the donors have studied whether there is capacity at the district and sub-district level to absorb the funds and produce quality results. And more than the capacity, one needs to examine if the states have the required will to improve themselves.

The Committee of Governors under the chairmanship of P.C. Alexander recommended that the approval of schemes and projects should be done at the state level in order to avoid huge delays in approval of projects and sanction of funds at the central level, and in receipt of funds by the state governments; and to ensure timely expenditure in the financial year. The committee further recommended the allotment of Block Grants and Untied Funds to State Governments giving full autonomy to the states to take up schemes for the welfare of SCs and STs.

One clear result following introduction of the strategy had been that, in the Fifth Plan period the figure was Rs.75 crores, while in each of the preceding plans it was even lesser. In the Sixth Plan period, the total investment in the tribal areas is estimated to be over Rs.4,000 crores.

In addition to the boost in financial investment, the other important features of the Sub-Plan strategy comprise:

#### **Tribal Sub-Plan Strategy: Andhra Pradesh**

Ever since independence, the government has been endeavoring for the upliftment of the Scheduled Tribes so as to bring them on par with the general society. However, there is still a wide gap between the general population and the STs in many respects: The literacy rate amongst the STs is only 37 percent against 60.5 percent for the total population. Similarly, the Infant Mortality Rate among STs is about 126 per 1000 births, while it is about 62 per 1000 births for the total population. The ST population below poverty line is 23 percent, while it is 11 percent for the total population. Thus, it is clear that there is an immediate need to redouble efforts to bridge the gap between the STs and the general population.<sup>12</sup>

In order to protect the tribals from exploitation and to bridge the gap in the levels of development between tribal areas and plain areas, the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) strategy has come into existence in the state since 1975. The most significant aspect of this strategy is to ensure flow of funds into TSP areas at least in equal proportion of the ST population of each of the State and UT.

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<sup>12</sup> Proceedings (GoMs No. 45) of Social Welfare Department, GoAP 2007.

As per the directions of the Planning Commission of India under TSP strategy, all Government Departments in the state must allocate a definite percentage of their plan funds which is equal to the proportion of tribal population in the state to the total population of the State. As per 2001 Census the ST population in Andhra Pradesh is 50.24 lakhs, constituting 6.6 percent of the total population of the state. All the departments were directed to show their TSP allocations scheme-wise under a minor head “796”.

These allocations are to ensure direct benefits to individuals or families of STs as part of the broad concerns of TSP to improve the livelihoods of tribals and protect them from exploitation. For the purpose of taking up appropriate programs, the tribals have been brought under the schemes of ITDA, MADA, Cluster, DTG and PTG.

On the basis of the above criteria, the total budget allocation of each sectoral department should be earmarked under non-divertible TSP program by opening a separate sub-head in the budget of the respective department in the state.<sup>13</sup>

The Tenth Five-Year Plan had aimed for substantial empowerment of Dalits and Adivasi communities over the plan period 2002-2007; furthermore the UPA Government in its National Common Minimum Program had committed to the welfare of the SCs and STs. However, there is no visible attempt from the Government towards fulfilling such commitments. The magnitude of allocations meant substantially for the development of SCs and STs shows a decline from 2.26 percent of the Total Union Government Expenditure in 2005-2006 RE to 2.23 percent of the same in 2006-07 BE. This implies that lack of adequate financial resources provided by the Union Government poses a major obstacle in the development of Dalits and Adivasis.<sup>14</sup>

The Eleventh Five-Year Plan document admits that “it is disturbing to see that both these schemes (Special Component Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan) have not been implemented with a full sense of commitment and involvement, either by the Central or State governments. The Eleventh Five-Year Plan also envisages the realization of 50 percent of the total irrigation potential in tribal areas by the end of the plan period, and total potential by 2020.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> D.V.V. Ramana Rao, *Tribal Development New Approaches* (1992), Discovery Publishing House, New Delhi.

<sup>14</sup> “Whose side are you on, Mr. Finance Minister?”, *Response to the Union Budget 2006-07*, CBGA (2006), New Delhi.

<sup>15</sup> Shakti Golder, “Adivasis”, published in background note “National Convention on Union Budget 2008-09), Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability, New Delhi.

Although the Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan were put in place much earlier, it is only since 2004-05, that different departments/Ministries started to show the proportion of budget earmarked for the schemes and in that year; only five out of 104 departments/Ministries showed their earmarked allocations for the SCs/STs. However in the subsequent years, the number gradually increased and this number in 2009-2010 is around 30.<sup>16</sup>

In fact, the Government of Andhra Pradesh is not following the TSP strategy. The following table shows that the earmarked funds under the TSP are less than the proportion of STs and variance during the period 1999-2004. The total diverted amount was Rs.431 crores during the four-year period.

Year	Total Plan Outlay (Rs. in crores)	TSP Allocation (Rs. in crores)	Percent of Total Plan Outlay	Due Share (Rs. in crores)	Difference/ Diverted (Rs. in crores)
1999-2000	5479.50	216.59	4	328.77	-112.18
2000-01	8228	291.62	3.5	493.68	-202.06
2001-02	8319.40	320.30	3.85	549	-228.78
2002-03	8553	639	7.4	564	+74.50
2003-04	10970.46	761.48	6.9	724	+37.42

(Computed from the data on Tribal Welfare Achievements, 1999-2009, Tribal Welfare Department, GoAP)

Several committees have been constituted to ensure effective implementation of the TSP. But the committees hardly found time to sit and review of the progress of the TSP strategies. The number of sittings of various committees set up in Andhra Pradesh is an indication of the commitment of the government. As a part of this a state-level Standing Tripartite Committee was constituted in 1999 under the chairmanship of the Hon'ble Minister for Tribal Welfare. However it met so far only three times. The committee decided on 26-6-07 to meet once in three months and review the implementation of TSP in all line departments.

Another committee, namely the State High Level Co-ordination Committee was instituted under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary to the Government to monitor the implementation of TSP in 1981. The committee met only four times between

<sup>16</sup> Peoples Charter of Demands for Union Budget (2010-2011), Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (2009), New Delhi.

2004 and 2007. On the suggestions of the State Level Standing Tripartite Committee during the meeting in March 2007, the GoAP constituted district, municipal and mandal level committees to review the progress of TSP.

An “Apex Committee” was also constituted under the Chairmanship of the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh to monitor the implementation of SCSP and TSP in September, 2007, and decided to review once in six months the progress of TSP. The committee met four times between 2007 and 2009.

The State Government constituted a “Nodal Agency” in November, 2007, under the chairmanship of the Hon’ble Minister for Tribal Welfare to take up frequent operational reviews of TSP and to monitor the allocation, expenditure, and implementation of TSP once every two months. However, till November, 2008, only two meetings were held.

In spite of the several committees constituted to monitor its implementation, the TSP funds were diverted for the benefit of people other than the STs. The funds were not allocated by the departments according to the mandatory allocation as per the Planning Commission’s guidelines. Moreover, even the amounts spent under TSP did not help the tribals improve their livelihoods.

The report of the meeting of the state level nodal agency for TSP held on 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2008, under the Chairmanship of the Minister for Tribal Welfare, says that as per the annual plan, 2008-09, the total state outlay is Rs.43191.61 crores. Of this, Rs.3267.63 crores, i.e., 7.7 percent of the total plan outlay is allotted for the TSP. Furthermore, as per the allocations in 2008-09, out of 131 departments, only 41 departments have made the mandatory TSP allocations of 6.6 or more percent; 28 departments have made TSP allocation less than 6.6 percent; while 62 departments have not made any TSP allocations. There are 35 departments that have been identified as key departments and play a significant role in implementing the TSP; they account for 92 percent of the TSP allocation.

The state’s political and economic practice has been quite contrary to its utterances and this is reflected in allocation as well as implementation of the programs. For instance, the state plan outlay for the year 2009-2010 was Rs.33,496.75 crores out of which an allocation of Rs.2,370.86 crores was made under TSP, which amounts to 7.08 percent. However, the expenditure under TSP was only Rs.1,527.88 crores which amounts only to 5.14 percent, which is against the mandatory benefit expected to be provided, i.e., 6.6 percent, to tribal population in the state.

If TSP allocations are not made as per mandatory provisions by the departments, little would remain for discussion before the committees to monitor the TSP strategy. The TSP allocations during the annual plan for the year 2011-2012 also show the sheer

neglect on the part of the state in following the Planning Commission's guidelines. The amount being deposited under the TSP account is less than the mandatory flow of 6.6 percent even as per the tribal population according to the 2001 Census. While the total state outlay was Rs.42,91,536.54 lakhs, the TSP allocation was only Rs.2,29,229.20 lakhs, which amounts to only 5.34 percent which is less than the mandatory minimum of 6.6 percent. Out of the 63 important departments, 22 departments allocated TSP funds of less than 6.6 percent; and the allocations by the various departments, average from 1.49 to 5.79 percent.

As far as the Panchayati Raj bodies are concerned, there was a separate Government Order issued in 1977 for earmarking funds for the benefit of tribals; and in 1988, orders were issued to enhance the provision of earmarked funds for STs out of the general funds of the *Zilla Parishads* (ZPs) and the *Mandal Praja Parishads* (MPPs) from 3 to 6 percent, in order to accelerate the development of the STs. It is the responsibility on the part of the *Zilla Parishads* and *Mandal Parishads* to transfer one-third of the earmarked TSP funds to the Tribal Development Agencies for the benefit of the STs. The remaining funds were to be utilized by the Panchayati Raj departments either to take up useful activities for tribals or to be made available to the Tribal Welfare Departments for the implementation of programs that benefit the tribals. All these norms were however not followed since several years, and there is no mechanism to monitor the implementation of these orders.

**The fundamental failures are:**

- (i) Failure to provide the requisite 6.6 percent budget under TSP. Many departments are showing a notional provision of 6.6 percent under the TSP without concomitant physical targets.
- (ii) Most of the departments are failing to distribute the TSP budget district wise, both in physical and financial terms. This is in turn responsible for poor utilization of TSP grants at field level.
- (iii) None of the departments is distributing the TSP budget mandal wise.
- (iv) No allocations are made in specific to free tribals from exploitation to achieve the other objectives of TSP strategy.
- (v) Some of the amounts spent on causes such as tribal land alienation, implementation of forest rights recognition Act, etc., are only met under the regular State Tribal Welfare Budgets but not under TSP.
- (vi) No planning exercise is made by the other departments to implement the TSP funds in consultation with the Tribal Welfare Departments or its agencies like the ITDAs.

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