

A study on Government Policies and Tribal Welfare Schemes in India: Promoting Tribal Rights

Smt.G.R.N.S.Sujatha Lecturer in Botany Dr.V.S.Krishna Government Degree college (A) visakhapatnam.

Dr.Dandugula.Madhu Sudhakar Lecturer in Botany Government College for Men Kurnool

Smt B.Bhavani Lecturer in Botany KVR Government College women Kurnool

Peetla Sravanthi Scholar in Botany Silver Jubilee Government College Kurnool

Abstract

The Scheduled Tribes (ST) population in India is estimated to be 10.45 crore, or 8.6% of the country's overall population, according to the 2011 Census. India is home to a dynamic and diversified assortment of tribal people. These communities, which include more than 705 different groups, are dispersed throughout the nation and frequently reside in isolated, difficult-to-reach places. The Indian government has implemented a number of programs and policies targeted at the improvement of these tribal communities, with an emphasis on socioeconomic empowerment, sustainable development, and cultural preservation. Land alienation, debt, identity difficulties, low literacy and education, unemployment, displacement and rehabilitation, and poor health, nutrition, and cleanliness are the main issues facing tribes. These are accompanied by policy-making flaws. application and employee training of government agencies stationed in tribal communities so they may comprehend their demands and carry out their responsibilities as directed by the government. The policies and initiatives intended to support the growth of India's tribal communities are examined in this essay. It offers a thorough examination of historical settings, contemporary policies, difficulties, and their efficacy. The study looks at important topics like cultural preservation, economic development, healthcare, and education. Emphasizing effective methods and pointing up gaps.

Key words: Tribal communities, . Land alienation, Rehabilitation, Poor health, Unemployment,PVTGs

Introduction In indiaThe Gond, Bhils, Santhal, Munda, Khasi, Garo, Angami, Bhutia, Chenchu, Kodaba, and the vast Andamanese tribes are most well-known tribes. Among these tribes, the Bhils are the biggest in India. With a population of about 104 million, or 8.6% of India's overall population, they are acknowledged as the nation's original occupants. These groups preserve their unique social, cultural, and linguistic identities, and they are primarily located in mountainous and forested areas.

According to Article 342, most tribal populations in India are collectively recognized as scheduled tribes. India has a very diversified population of tribal people, each of whom has distinct needs and traits that call for a different strategy.

The Indian Constitution ensures that no one will be subjected to prejudice. This article focuses on India's Service Safeguards for Tribals, Cultural & Educational Safety Measures, Political Measures, Administrative Protection, Problems Indian Tribals Face and Other Tribal Issues, Tribal empowerment strategies in India, Government initiatives through provisions in the educational sector for Tribal Empowerment, various Schemes, etc. Thus, this essay aims to analyze the constitutional clauses that support the advancement of India's tribal population.

1. Indian Constitutional Clauses Concerning Tribes

India's Tribal Service Protections: In order to ensure adequate representation, states may reserve seats for members of any backward class in appointments or posts under Article 16(4). States may grant reservations for promotions under Article 16(4A) if SC/STs are underrepresented in state-run services. Article 16(4B) makes it clear that backlog vacancies will not be included in addition to current year opportunities for determining the maximum percentage of 50% reserve. **Indian Tribal Economic Rights:** According to Article 244(1), Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes are managed and controlled in line with the provisions of the Fifth Schedule, with the exception of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Tripura, which are covered by the Sixth Schedule. Article 275 grants are available to designated states (STs and SCs) under the Fifth and Sixth Schedules. **Social Rights of Indian Tribal People:** Article 23 prohibits bonded labor, forced labor, and human trafficking. There are repercussions for breaking this clause. Article 24 forbids child labor.

Articles 371A to 371J: Special Provisions For states like Nagaland, Mizoram, and others with sizable tribal populations, these articles offer particular administrative provisions. They guaranty the preservation of local government systems, land rights, and cultural customs. In order to empower tribal groups, a number of legislation and policies, including the Forest Rights Act of 2006 and the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act of 1996 (PESA), complement these constitutional provisions and secure their rights over land and resources.

2. Educational and cultural safety protocols

Article 15(4): Special arrangements for the advancement of other backward classes, including STs. **Article 29:** Protecting the Interests of Minorities (including STs). **Article 46:** The State must safeguard the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes from social injustice and all forms of exploitation, and it must take particular care to promote the economic and educational interests of the underprivileged. right to maintain a distinctive script, language, or culture (Article 350).

[a] Political actions:

[i] Article 330: Lok Sabha seats reserved for STs; [ii] Article 332: ST seats reserved in state legislatures; [iii] Article 243: Panchayat Seat Reservation; [iv] Administrative Protection:

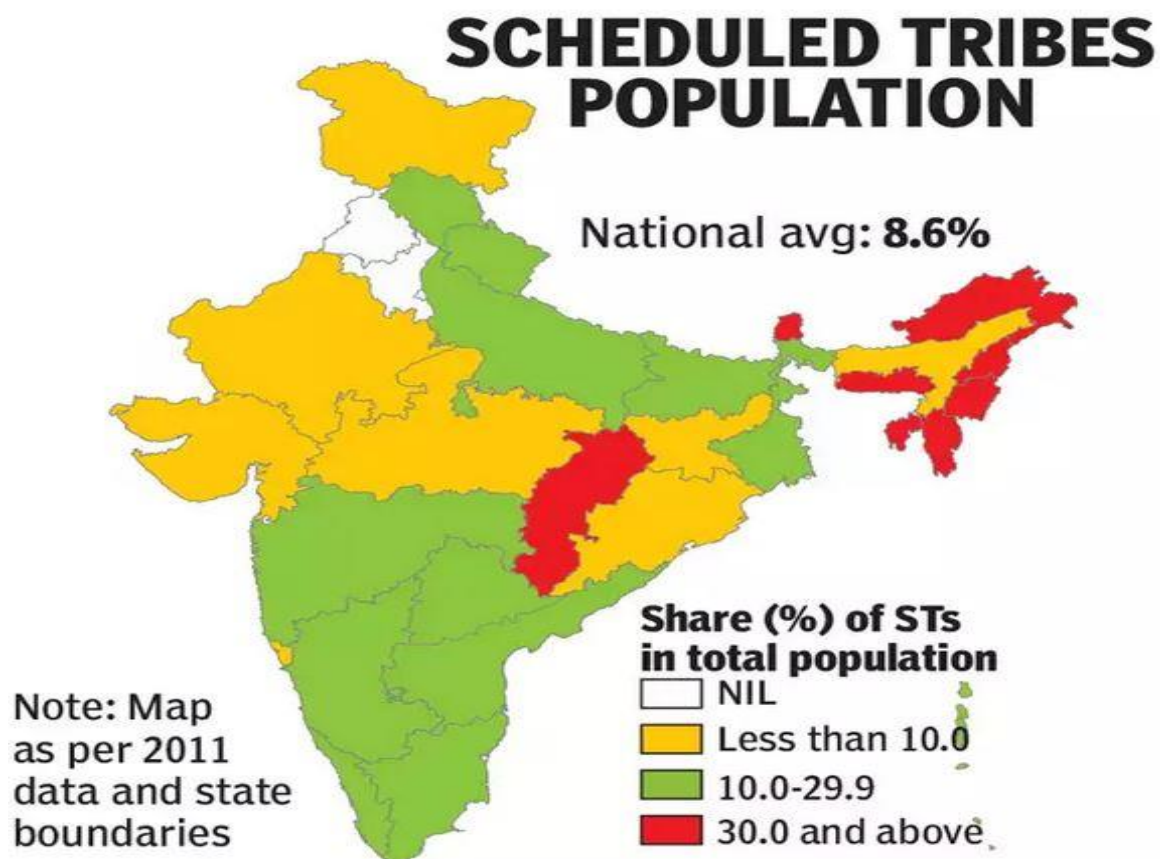
Article 275: In an effort to more effectively administer and promote the welfare of Scheduled Tribes, the Union Government may provide the State Government with additional revenue. According to Article 350 A, "Every state and every local authority within the state shall endeavor to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother-tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups." The president may give any state instructions he deems appropriate or necessary to ensure the provision of such facilities. The majority of tribal communities speak their own languages or dialects, which typically come from distinct linguistic families than the official language of the state.

3. Political Protective measures

According to Article 164 (1), there must be a minister in charge of tribal welfare in the states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Orissa. This minister may also oversee the welfare of the Scheduled Castes, backward classes, or any other task. (ii) Seats in the House of the People are reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes under Article 330. (iii) Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are guarantyd seats in state legislatures under Article 332. (iv) Originally, Article 334 stated that the provisions pertaining to the reservation of seats for SCs and STs in the Lok Sabha and State Vidhan Sabhas (as well as the presentation of the Anglo-Indian community in the Lok Sabha and the State Vidhan Sabhas by nomination) would expire after ten years from the start of the Constitution.

4. Indigenous conflicts in India

1. **Land Rights:** One of the main issues facing indigenous societies is the lack of solid land rights. Many tribes live in remote or wooded areas where their traditional rights to resources and land are often disregarded, leading to their expulsion and exclusion from their homeland.
2. **Socioeconomic Marginalization:** Tribal populations often experience socioeconomic marginalization, which includes deprivation, a lack of access to quality healthcare and education, and basic needs like clean water and sanitary facilities. Indigenous populations generally have lower levels of schooling than the national average. Due to linguistic difficulties, cultural disparities, and limited access to high-quality education, tribal children may encounter problems in their educational development.
3. **Exploitation and Bonded Labor:** In remote regions with weak law enforcement, some tribal groups are vulnerable to human trafficking, bonded labor, and exploitation.
4. **Cultural Erosion:** Rapid urbanization and modernity may cause tribal cultures, languages, and practices to disappear. The younger generation may find it challenging to preserve their cultural identity. Indigenous groups often have inadequate political representation and a poor voice when it comes to making decisions that impact their rights and well-being, even with safeguards in place.
5. **Land and Resource Rights:** The acknowledgment and defense of indigenous populations' land and resource rights is essential to their well-being. In order to ensure their survival, tribes must find solutions to their severe land alienation and displacement challenges.
6. **Education and Skill Development:** By providing high-quality education and skill development programs that are tailored to their needs and cultural context, tribal groups can gain stronger access to livelihood opportunities and greater involvement in the mainstream economy.
7. **Health and Sanitation:** Ensuring that tribal communities have access to sufficient healthcare facilities and sanitation is essential to improving their overall health and well-being, as they often face specific health problems due to their remote location and limited access to services.
8. **Empowerment of Women:** Recognizing the important role that women play in tribal societies and promoting their active participation in decision-making, economic activities, and community development.
9. **Promotion of Indigenous Culture:** The advancement and preservation of tribal languages, artwork, rituals, and cultural practices are essential to the rich diversity of India's past. To ensure that their opinions are heard on matters that directly affect their lives, encourage tribes to be represented in local government and policy-making bodies. This is referred to as inclusion and involvement.



5. Tribal communities in India encounter specific challenges:

Tribal communities confront several obstacles that impede their socioeconomic growth and jeopardize their cultural existence in spite of these constitutional protections. Among the main obstacles are: Natural resource exploitation: Tribal areas frequently have abundant natural resources, including water bodies, forests, and minerals. However, local communities have often been uprooted and environmental deterioration has resulted from the mining of these resources. Resource exploitation is frequently given precedence over the rights and means of subsistence of tribal people under government policies that support industrialization and economic expansion. Significant ecological harm, the loss of traditional livelihoods, and the infringement of tribal land rights have all come from this. For instance, extensive mining operations in states like Jharkhand, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh have negatively impacted the local ecology and the health of tribal people by causing deforestation, soil erosion, and water pollution. Furthermore, displaced communities' socioeconomic vulnerability is made worse by inadequate compensation and rehabilitation.

6. Induced Migration:

Tribal populations are frequently uprooted as a result of infrastructure projects including dams, highways, and urban growth. The hardship of displaced tribes, who lose not only their homes but also their means of subsistence and traditional links to the land, is made worse by the lack of comprehensive rehabilitation strategies and insufficient compensation. For example, thousands of Adivasi households have been displaced by the Narmada Dam project, and they are finding it difficult to start over in new, frequently inappropriate settings. Unemployment, poverty, and social alienation result from the forced relocation's disruption of established social and economic structures. These problems are exacerbated by government initiatives' insufficiency in offering alternatives for alternative livelihoods and sustained resettlement.

Social and Economic Challenges: Among India's most economically challenged populations are tribal people. They are very impoverished, heavily indebted, and have little access to necessities like clean water, healthcare, and education. Traditional tribal economies have been upended by the invasion of foreign economic systems and cultures, which has resulted in a loss of livelihoods and a greater reliance on exploitative labor markets.

Traditional knowledge and traditions have also been lost as a result of the shift from a subsistence-based economy to a cash economy. Socioeconomic inequities are made worse in tribal areas by inadequate infrastructure and services, which make it challenging for these people to access chances for growth and necessary resources.

7. Health and Education Conditions:

Compared to the national average, tribal groups have much worse health and education metrics. Due to a lack of proper healthcare infrastructure, tribal populations frequently have high rates of infant mortality, malnutrition, and the prevalence of diseases like tuberculosis and malaria. Access to essential care is further hampered by the lack of high-quality healthcare services, cultural obstacles, and skepticism of contemporary medicine. Tribal areas have poor school infrastructure, high dropout rates, and a teacher shortage. There is a gap between schooling and the real-world experiences of tribal children because the curriculum frequently fails to take into account the cultural background and needs of these kids. Low literacy rates, little options for postsecondary education, and a lack of skilled jobs are all caused by these issues.

7. Cultural Integration and Survival:

The diverse cultural customs, languages, and practices of tribal societies are essential to their identity. However, the maintenance of these customs is seriously threatened by assimilation laws, modernization pressures, and outside cultural influences. Tribal languages, customs, and social systems are frequently undermined by the imposition of mainstream cultural norms and values.

8. Recent initiatives to strengthen Indian tribes

1. Zonal Cultural Centers (ZCCs): The Indian government has established seven ZCCs. In order to support the preservation of tribal languages and customs, they are responsible for organizing a wide variety of cultural events and programs on a regular basis around the nation. The councils have been constituted, with its main offices situated in Patiala, Nagpur, Udaipur, Prayagraj, Kolkata, Dimapur, and Thanjavur.

2. Regional Fairs: Under the Ministry of Culture's patronage, the ZCCs host several Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsavas and at least 42 regional festivals each year. The government provides grant-in-aid to all ZCCs to support these programs.

3. Promotion of Tribal Languages: The government funds the State Tribal Research Institutes to support tribal literature, offer bilingual primers to help preserve tribal languages, and promote tribal languages. By giving financial support to respectable institutions, the Tribal Research Information, Education, Communication, and Events (TRUECE) project seeks to promote tribal culture, artifacts, customs, and traditions of tribal groups.

4. Eklavya Model & Museums: Under the auspices of the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has agreed to establish around 750 Eklavya Model Residential Schools to promote the education of tribal children.

5. Adivasi Grants Management System (ADIGRAMS): This system can track the actual use of funds and keeps an eye on the financial and material advancement of the grants that the Ministry provides to the States in order to honor the heroic and patriotic actions of tribal people. The government has also approved eleven museums dedicated to tribal liberation fighters. In order to commemorate the birth anniversary of tribal freedom hero Birsa Munda, it was decided in 2021 to recognize November 15th as Janjatiya Gaurav Divas every year.

8. Tribal Communities' Socioeconomic Empowerment

To strengthen tribal communities, the government has started a number of initiatives, with a special emphasis on economic growth and revenue creation. For feasible business units, the Term Loan Scheme offers soft loans up to 90% of the unit cost with five to ten-year repayment terms. Designed specifically for indigenous women, the Adivasi Mahila Sashaktikaran Yojna (AMSY) offers discounted loans up to ₹2 lakhs at a mere 4% interest rate. Furthermore, the Micro Credit Scheme provides loans of up to ₹5 lakhs every tribal self-help group

(SHG). Tribal students can pursue higher education with interest discounts thanks to the Adivasi Shiksha Rinn Yojana (ASRY), which provides soft loans. By encouraging self-reliance, entrepreneurship, and education, these programs seek to raise the socioeconomic standing of native communities.



9. Greater Potential for Livelihood and Infrastructure

In communities with a sizable tribal population, the Pradhan Mantri Adi Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAAGY) seeks to provide basic infrastructure. 500 Scheduled Tribes (STs) and 36428 villages with a 50% tribal population have been designated under the program to receive basic infrastructure improvements. These villages include those in the NITI Aayog-identified Aspirational Districts.

10. Efforts to Strengthen Health Results

A comprehensive guideline for the prevention and control of hemoglobinopathies, including sickle cell disease (SCD), has been developed and disseminated to states by the National Health Mission under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The government has stepped its efforts to eradicate sickle cell disease (SCD), a genetic blood ailment that affects tribal people in Central, Western, and Southern India. In order to achieve this, the Prime Minister of Madhya Pradesh initiated the Sickle Cell Anemia Elimination Mission on July 1.

Through comprehensive awareness campaigns, universal screening, and counseling services, this mission is to improve treatment quality, lower the prevalence of the disease, and provide all SCD patients with accessible and affordable care. In order to guaranty that the most vulnerable tribal groups profit from these initiatives, it places a strong emphasis on cooperation between central ministries and state governments.

Apart from SCD activities, other health-related programs such as Mission Indradhanush seek to guaranty complete immunization for pregnant women and children under the age of two, with a particular emphasis on Adivasi populations. In order to further guaranty tribal inhabitants' access to healthcare, the objective has grown to include free COVID-19 vaccinations.

The Nikshay Mitra Initiative is another significant program that provides tuberculosis (TB) patients—many of whom are from tribal communities—with further diagnostic, nutritional, and career support. In order to improve the general health outcomes of vulnerable groups, this effort seeks to effectively combat tuberculosis.

Additionally, the Support to Tribal Research Institutes (TRI) program aims to enable TRIs to conduct training, documentation, research, and capacity-building initiatives. By preserving cultural history and tackling socioeconomic issues, these institutions serve as knowledge centers that support tribal development.

11. Honouring and Appreciating the Tribal Communities of India

In states where tribal people resided, fought the British, and refused to submit, ten museums dedicated to tribal freedom fighters have been approved. Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked for the creation of a development plan for Mangarh Dham in the Banswara district of Rajasthan on November 1, 2022. In 1913, the British massacred nearly 1500 Bhil independence fighters at Mangarh Dham, which lies close to the Rajasthan-Gujarat boundary. The governments of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra will collaborate to build the Mangarh Dham, a national memorial that will highlight the rich cultural heritage and tribal legacy.

12. PVTGs Development Scheme

India has 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) spread across 18 States and the Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The PVTGs Development Scheme focuses on improving their socio-economic conditions through interventions in education, healthcare, housing, livelihood, infrastructure and basic amenities, while protecting their traditional knowledge, culture and way of life.

Jan Jatiya Gaurav Divas is observed annually on November 15 to commemorate the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda, a revered tribal freedom fighter and social reformer. The Government of India officially declared November 15 as Jan Jatiya Gaurav Divas in 2021. The observance recognizes the rich tribal heritage, culture and contributions of tribal communities to India's freedom struggle and national development, while promoting awareness of their rights, dignity and welfare. Together with other government actions, these programs have cleared the way for the integration of indigenous communities into society while respecting their customs, traditions, and ways of life.

Conclusion

In addition to other guaranties, such as reservations and protection from discrimination, Scheduled Tribes and indigenous people in India enjoy land rights. However, since independence, tribal people who live in forests have been heavily exploited, frequently without their knowledge. The Forest Rights Act is crucial for preserving checks and balances on how these tribes are treated. The Act's village-level government, the Gram Sabha, guaranties a smooth and convenient protection system for their everyday needs and means of livelihood. This guaranties that these tribes won't have to worry about being exploited by the government or the corporate sector. This article points The Constitution of India itself seems to be very good for minorities. But the philosophy behind the Constitution is derogatory as it is the Hindu-caste stratification mindset which dominates the constitution; it is this mindset that dehumanizes tribal to the level of outcaste even though they are outside of the system. In spite of constitutional provisions (especially the part of Fundamental Rights) the attitudes of the dominant groups towards the subaltern communities has been almost not changing. Hence, in spite of land rights of tribals people till today tribals are the most displaced people and their land has been acquired for development projects etc.

References:

- Binoj, S. S., Sujatha, J. S., & David, I. (2018). *Tribe development through empowerment and technology*. Organizacja i Zarządzanie: kwartalnik naukowy.
- Guha, S., & Ismail, M. D. (2015). *Socio-cultural changes of tribes and their impacts on environment with special reference to Santhal in West Bengal*. *Global Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences*, 4(3), 148-156.
- Joshi, G. (1983). *Forest policy and tribal development: problems of implementation, ecology and exploitation*. *Soc Action*, 31, 446-468.
- Mader, P. (2024). *Orchestrating self-empowerment in tribal India: Debt bondage, land rights, and the strategic uses of spirituality*. *World Development*, 174, 106440.

Meher, R. (2009). *Globalization, displacement and the livelihood issues of tribal and agriculture dependent poor people: the case of mineral-based industries in India*. *Journal of Developing Societies*, 25(4), 457-480.

National Human Rights Commission Report (2002- 2003), New Delhi, 2003.

Patnaik, P. (2013). *Does political representation ensure empowerment? Scheduled tribes in decentralised local governments of India*. *Journal of South Asian Development*, 8(1), 27-60.

Prasad, R. R. (2011). *Capacity Building and Empowerment of Tribals in Scheduled Areas of India for Self Governance*. *The Oriental Anthropologist*, 11(2), 385-399.

Rao, K. Annamani. "A Study on Empowering Scheduled Tribes towards Political Process in India."

Singh, T. P., Tiwari, V., & Bhadoria, S. *A CRITICAL STUDY OF PROTECTIVE LAWS OF TRIBES IN INDIA: ITS EFFICACY AND IMPLICATIONS (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE OF MADHYA PRADESH)*.

Sisodia, S. Y. (2004). *Tribal People's Empowerment through Grassroot Level Institutions: A Case of Madhya Pradesh*. *Tribal Issues in India*. (Eds.). Shah, DC and Sisodia, Yatindra S. Jaipur: Rawat Publication.

The 44th Constitution Amendment Act 1978. The Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, [As amended by the Protector of Human Right (Amendment) Act 2006-No.43 of 2006], p.1 The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006.

Tsosie de Haro, C. (2017). *Federal restrictions on tribal customary law: the importance of tribal customary law in tribal courts*. *Tribal Law Journal*, 17

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2060243>

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2055996>

Annual Report 2023-24: <https://tribal.nic.in/KnowledgeHub.aspx>

Copyright & License:

© Authors retain the copyright of this article. This work is published under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0), permitting unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.