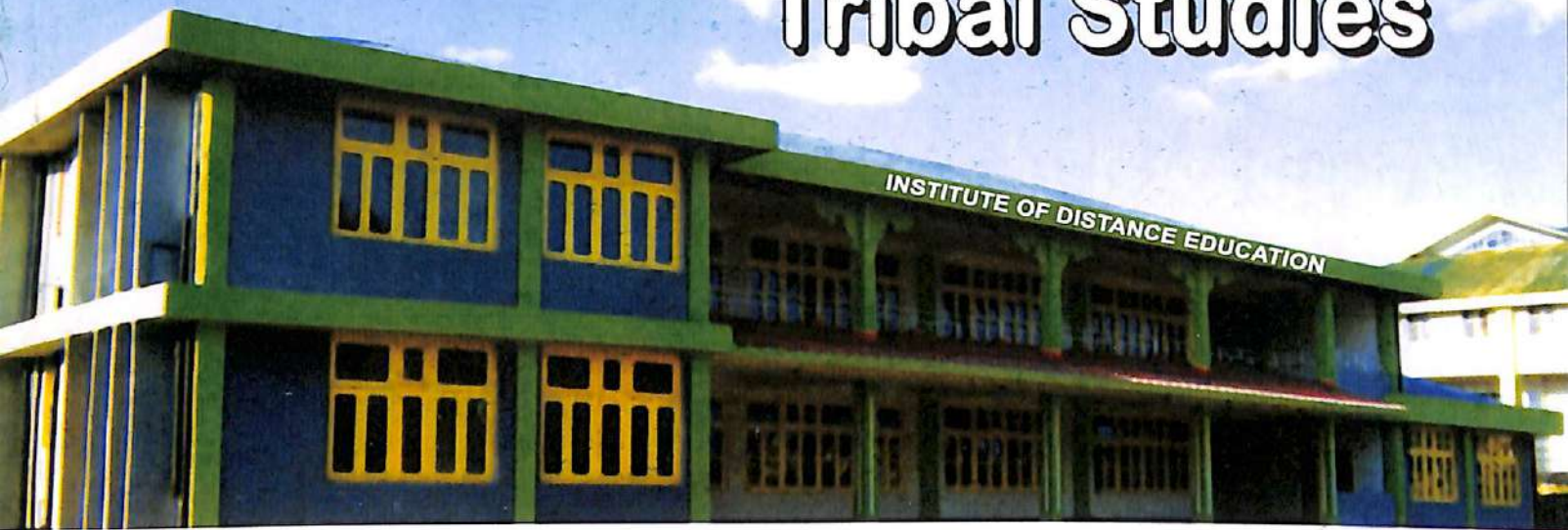


Tribal Studies



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**B.A. COURSE
THIRD YEAR**

PAPER-III

CONTEMPORARY TRIBAL ISSUES

INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
Rajiv Gandhi University
Rono Hills, Itanagar

Paper III
Contemporary Tribal Issues

Unit-I Economic Problems

Poverty, Indebtedness, Land alienation, unemployment, migration displacement and globalisation, rehabilitation, impact of urbanization and industrialization.

Unit-II Issues of Identity

Social movements and types - Recent trends.

Unit-III Tribal Rights

- (a) Land, Forest and Water
- (b) IPR
- (c) Human rights

Unit-IV Emerging Social Problems

Problems of the aged, issue of access to education and literacy. Malnutrition, alcoholism, drug abuse, child-labour, trafficking, HIV/AIDS, gender inequality, safe-drinking water, re-productive health

Unit-V Language Issues

Script issue, medium of instruction and preservation of language and problem

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UNIT I

Economic Problem

1.0 Objective

The object of the unit is to introduce students the basic economic problems and their meaning, types, characteristics etc. The unit basically deals with problems like poverty, land alienation, unemployment, displacement urbanization, etc and their magnitudes, consequences in general among various social groups. It also provides a general outline of various governmental initiatives to eradicate these social menaces from time to time.

1.1 Concept of Poverty

Poverty is one of the main social problems which have attracted attention of various social scientists like sociologists, anthropologists, economists, etc. Poverty can be defined as a social phenomenon in which a section of the society is unable to fulfill even its basic necessities of life. When a substantial segment of a society is deprived of the minimum level of living and continues at a bare subsistence level, that society is said to be plagued with mass poverty. It indicates a condition in which a person fails to maintain a living standard adequate for his physical and mental efficiency. It is a situation people want to escape. It gives rise to a feeling of a discrepancy between what one has and what one should have. It can be defined as a situation when people are unable to satisfy the basic needs of life. The definition and methods of measuring poverty differs from country to country. According to the definition by Planning Commission of India, poverty line is drawn with an intake of 2400 calories in rural areas and 2100 calories in urban areas. If a person is unable to get that much minimum level of calories, then he/she is considered as being below poverty line (Lekhi, 2004).

No doubt that problem of poverty is faced by all developing countries these days referred to as the *Third World* countries, which constitute two-thirds of the total world population but the poverty in India has few parallels in the world. Poverty is writ large on the face of an average Indians. Poverty on a mass scale exists because the level of national income in India is very low. Besides, even this low national income is very unevenly distributed.

To understand the problem of poverty better we may distinguish between absolute poverty and relative poverty which are the two expressions quite common in any in depth study of poverty. These two types of standards i.e **absolute and relative poverty**, are common in economic literature to measure poverty.

1.1.1 Absolute Poverty

Right from the 19th century, some researchers are trying to fix some yardstick for measuring poverty in precise terms. Ideally speaking such a yardstick would help us establish a fixed level of poverty, known as *poverty line*, below which poverty begins and above which poverty ends. Such a yardstick is believed to be universal in character and would be applicable to all the societies. This concept of poverty is known as "absolute poverty".

Absolute poverty is often known as "subsistence poverty" since it is based on assessments of minimum subsistence requirements such food, clothing, shelter, health requirements etc. Absolute Poverty of a person means that his income or consumption expenditure is so meager that he lives below the minimum subsistence level. Because of his absolute poverty condition, he will not be able to maintain his health and efficiency and, in fact, he may be starving.

Some concepts of absolute poverty would even include the idea of "*basic cultural needs*". This broadens the idea of basis human needs beyond the level of physical survival. *Drewowski and scott* include education, security, leisure and recreation in their category of "basic cultural need".

The concept of absolute poverty has been widely criticised. It is based on the assumption that there are minimum basic needs for all people in all societies. This is a difficult argument to defend even in regard to subsistence poverty measured in terms of food, clothing and shelter. Such needs vary both between and within societies. It becomes still more difficult to defend the concept of absolute poverty when it is extended to include the idea of "basic cultural needs". Such needs vary from time to time and place to place and any attempt to establish absolute, fixed standards is bound to fail.

1.1.2 Relative poverty

The difficulties involved in the application of the concept of absolute poverty, made some researchers to abandon the concept altogether. In place of absolute standards, they have developed the idea of relative standards that is standards which are relative to particular time and place. In this way, the idea of absolute poverty has been replaced by the idea of relative poverty.

Relative poverty indicates the large inequalities of income, those who are in the lower income brackets receive less than those who are in the higher income groups. The people with lower incomes are relatively poor compared with those higher incomes, even though they may be living above the minimum level of subsistence.

In other words, relative poverty is measured in terms of judgements by members of a particular society of what is considered a reasonable and acceptable standard of living and styles of life according to the conventions of the day. Just as conventions change from time to time and place to place, so will definitions of poverty. In a rapidly changing world, definitions of poverty based on relative standards will be constantly changing and hence *definition of poverty must be related to the need and demands of a changing society.*

Even the concept of relative poverty presents certain problem. It cannot be assumed that there are universally accepted standards of reasonable and acceptable life-style. Within a particular society, ethnicity, religion, age and a variety of other factors can vary judgements of reasonable standards.

The concept of relative poverty poses problems for the comparison of the poor in the same society over a period of time and between societies. For example, it become difficult to make a comparison of the poor in present-day and 19th century India; or of present day India and European countries or those of African countries. However, a solution for this problem of comparison has been suggested by Peter Townsend. He argues that two standards of poverty are required, "national-relational" and "world-relational". With the use of these standards it would be possible to compare poverty in different societies, says Townsend.

1.2 Estimate and Magnitude of Poverty in India

The incidence of poverty is measured in terms of the percentage of total population living below the poverty line. It shows how many are poor and brings out the extent of poverty in the country. Widespread poverty in India has attracted the attention of a number of economists and other social scientists and organizations. Some of the important studies have been undertaken by Dandekar and Rath, B.S Minhas, P.K Bardhan, P.D Ojha, the World Bank and the Planning Commission of India and others.

Estimate of the Planning Commission

The Planning Commission of India adopted the nutritional criteria to measure poverty. In 1979, the calorie requirement according to it was 2400 per person in rural areas and 2100 in urban areas. The monthly expenditure required to have the necessary calorie intake according to 1979-80 prices was Rs. 76 in rural areas and Rs. 88 in urban areas. Those who could not incur that expenditure lived below the poverty line. The Seventh Plan has drawn the poverty line on the basis of annual income per family in the rural areas is Rs. 6,400 and Rs. 7,300 for the urban families. Families with less than this income is said to be absolute poor. The estimates of incidence of poverty at national level are given in the table no.1.1 below.

Table No.1.1

Year	Poverty Ratios			Number of poor (in million)		
	Rural	Urban	Combined	Rural	Urban	Combined
1973-74	56.4	49.0	54.9	261.3	60.0	321.3
1977-78	53.1	45.2	51.3	264.3	64.6	328.9
1983	45.7	40.8	44.5	252.0	70.9	322.9
1987-88	39.1	38.2	38.9	231.9	75.2	307.1
1993-94	37.3	32.4	36.0	244.0	76.3	320.3
1999-00	27.1	23.6	26.1	193.2	67.1	260.3
2007*	21.1	15.1	19.3	170.5	49.6	220.1

*Poverty projection for 2007. Source: *Economic Survey 2003-04.*

- The Planning Commission's figures on poverty bring out the following facts about poverty in India.
- The incidence of poverty has witnessed a steady decline from 51.3 per cent in 1977-78 to 36 per cent in 1983-84 and 26 per cent in 1999-2000. It is projected to decline to 19.3 per cent in 2007.
 - Though the poverty ratio has decline, the number of poor in the country has remained at around 320 million for a long period due to India's growth of population. But the latest estimates of poverty for 1999-2000 reveal a significantly reduced number of poor to about 260 million out of a total population of 997 million. The number of poor in India is projected to fall to 220 million in 2007.
 - The poverty ratio is estimated to be 27.1 per cent in rural areas and 23.6 per cent in urban areas and 26.1 per cent for the country as a whole in 1999-2000. The Planning Commission projects the poverty rate to fall to 21.1 per cent and 15.1 per cent respectively in rural and urban areas in 2007.
 - Wide disparities are visible in the poverty ratio between rural and urban areas. Poverty ratios are higher in rural areas compared to urban areas.

Estimate of National Sample Survey

The National Sample Survey (NSS) 55th (1999-2000) round, consumer expenditure survey provides data for four different social groups viz. Scheduled Tribes (ST), Schedule Caste (SC), Other Backward Classes (OBC) and Others. Other Backward Classes are the dominant category constituting 38% of the rural population. SCs constitute 20% of rural population and STs constitute 11%. Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes are the most socially disadvantaged groups and together account for 31% of India's rural population.

The table no. 2.1 below presents the incidence of poverty across social group at the All India level and their contribution to total numbers considered to be in poverty in India.

Table No. 2.1 Poverty across Social Group in India, 1999-2000

Social Group	Head Count Ratio	% Contribution to total poverty
Schedule Tribe	45.03	17.26
Schedule Caste	35.85	26.75
Other Backward Classes	27.54	37.76
Others	15.88	18.23
All Classes	27.65	100

Source: Based on 55th NSS round data.

It is clear that the incidence of poverty among Schedule Tribes is the highest followed by Schedule Caste. These two social groups, even though they constitute only 31% of the total rural population, account for nearly 44% of the rural poor at the All India level. Even at the state level, poverty is highest among the ST and SC households. States like Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa have more than 50% of their households below the poverty line. Among the 15 major states, Orissa witness the highest poverty among STs i.e, 74% of households are below poverty line and Bihar has 59% of SCs below poverty line Kumar and Vani, 2007).

1.3 Causes of poverty in India

The factors for the existence of mass poverty in India are manifold. According to the Draft Fifth Plan, the twin causes of poverty are under-development and inequality in distribution of National Income. Professors Dandekar and Rath as well as Dr. Minhas have attributed poverty to the existence of unemployment and under-employment in the country, particularly in rural areas. However, in our view, poverty is too complex a problem to be attributed to one or two causes. Several factors have acted and interacted upon each there to create the conditions of grinding poverty in the country. Accordingly, the causes of poverty can be discussed under the following heads: (i) Individual incapacity (ii) Economic Factors (iii) Social Factors (iv) Demographic Factors and (v) Other factors.

1.3.1 Individual incapacity

From the view point of the ideology of individualism, the individual failure itself is responsible for poverty. Success or failure in life, according to this ideology, is entirely a personal matter. Hence it is logical to conclude that if an individual fails to achieve success in life and suffers from poverty, he himself is to be blamed for his laziness, inactivity, lack of initiative, dullness and incapacities. The Protestants ethics described by Max Weber also emphasizes this aspect.

However, there are some contributing factors or causes for an individual's incapacity or failure. Failure in life may be due to some inborn deficiencies, such as, physical or mental handicap, dumbness, deafness, blindness, and so on. Some of the deficiencies might have been developed later in life. Since an individual does not have any control over many of these deficiencies, he is bound to yield to them and suffer from them. They make an individual a parasite on society.

Some of the deficiencies which can be managed or overcome, are often neglected by some individuals and hence they fall a prey to the problem of poverty. We may include under this category, deficiencies such as illiteracy, laziness, extravagance, immorality, bad habits such as gambling, alcoholism, etc.

1.3.2 Economic Factors

- 1 Low Productivity in Agriculture:** The level of productivity in agriculture is very low in due to subdivided and fragmented holdings, lack of capital, use of traditional methods of cultivation and illiteracy etc. This is the main cause of poverty in the country.
- 2 Under Utilised Resources:** The existence of under employment and unemployment of human resources and under utilisation of resources has resulted in low production in agricultural sector. This brought down fall in their standard of living.
- 3 Unmanageable Inflationary Pressure:** Due to incessant inflation, the value of money has come down. It has come down to 8.28 paise from 1960-61 to 1990-91. The annual rate of inflation is currently (1991) estimated to be at 7.2%. So such inflationary pressure has benefited for a few people in the society and the persons in lower income group find it difficult to get their minimum needs.

- 4 Low Rate of Economic Development:** The rate of economic development in India has been below the required level. The rate of growth of our economy between 1951-71 has been just 3.5% which is negligible. Our per capita income is still very less. Many of our Five Year Plans ended with failure without achieving the targeted growth.
- 5 Increasing Unemployment:** Our economy has not provided enough employment opportunities for the people. Hence unemployment is mounting. In 1952, the number of registered unemployed persons was about 4.37 lakhs it increased to 334 lakhs in 1990. By December 1991, the figure has swelled to 36.3 millions.
- 6 Capital Deficiency:** Industries require huge capital for their fast growth. But lack enough capital has hampered the growth of our industries. The process economic liberalisation which has been let loose recently is yet to show its results.

1.3.3 Social Factors

- 1 Traditionalism:** India is a land of traditionalism, communalism, casteism, linguism, parochialism, religious and linguistic prejudices and so on. These factors have a negative effect on country's progress by making people dogmatic in their approach and narrow minded and selfish in outlook.
- 2 Illiteracy and Ignorance:** illiteracy and Ignorance are supportive of poverty. By 1981, there were about 40.33 crore illiterate in the country. Further our defective educational system is incapable of generating employment and there is no guarantee of job for the educated youths.
- 3 Dominance of Caste and Joint Families:** Our caste system still has its hold on the caste members. The caste system compels its members to stick on to the traditional and hereditary occupations of the caste. It does not give encouragement to the caste members to take up to jobs of their choices. In the very same manner, the joint families which are still dominant on the rural areas do not allow young members to take initiative in making new adventures in the employment and economic spheres.
- 4 Demographic factors:** Population in India is growing at an alarming rate. Within 60 years (1921-1981) it had doubled. It had reached an incredible number of 84.39 crore in 1991. Hence the little progress that is achieved in the economic sphere is being eaten away by the growing population. About 7% of the people (4.75 crores) are above 60 years and their capacity to contribute to economic production is limited. About 40% of the people are below 14 years of age and hence are incapable of earning.

1.3.4 Other factors

- 1 Long Period of Foreign Rule:** India was under foreign rule for a long period. The British who ruled India ruthlessly, has systematically spoiled the basic economic structure of our land and destroyed the various arts, crafts, cottage and small industries which we had previously. They exploited Indian resources for the glory of Britain and made Indians parasites in several respects.
- 2 Climatic factors:** Climate can also be a cause of poverty. The hot climate of India reduces the capacity of the people to work, and hence, naturally, production cannot be increased in the desired quantity.
- 3 Wars and Threats of War:** India had to spend huge amount of money on wars which she had fought with China and Pakistan. There is constant threat of war also. Hence huge amount of money is being spent on our defence industry. About 15% to 25% of national income was spent previously on defence purposes and very recently it is reduced to 16.7% (1989-90).
- 4 Defective Political System and Lack of Political Will:** Indian political system is very often condemned as corrupt, inefficient, and defective. Unhealthy competition among the political parties for power has many a times damaged our national interests. Our political leaders lack nationalistic fervor and will power to face the challenges that are confronting the nation.

1.4 Poverty Eradication Programmes

According to Dhage (2008) poverty alleviation programmes in India can be divided into two time periods:

1. Poverty Alleviation Programmes up to 1990.
2. Poverty Alleviation Programmes in the Reform Period.

1.4.1 Poverty Alleviation Programmes up to 1990

In order to tackle poverty, various target-based schemes were introduced after independence. However, it was during the Fifth Five-Year Plan that a sustained and direct attack on poverty was evolved as a key plan strategy. It was noted that the elimination of abject poverty could not be attained as a corollary to an acceleration in the rate of growth of the economy alone. Major poverty alleviation programmes introduced during 1950-1990 were the following:

- 1 Community Development Programme (CDP) in 1952.
- 2 Crash Scheme for Rural Employment (CSRE) in 1972.
- 3 Drought-prone Area Programme (DPAP) in 1973.
- 4 Marginal Farmer and Agricultural labour agency (MFALA) in 1973.
- 5 Small Farmer Development Agency (SFDA) in 1974.
- 6 Twenty-Point Programme (TTP) in 1975.
- 7 Food for Work Programme (FWP) in 1977.
- 8 Training Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM) in 1979.
- 9 Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) in 1980.
- 10 National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) in 1980.
- 11 Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) in 1982.
- 12 Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) in 1989.
- 13 Nehru Rozgar Yojana (NRY) in 1989.

Most of these programmes were conceived and founded by the Central Government which determined the criteria for allocation between the states. Actual implementation was left to the state Government agencies subject to guidelines regarding the scope and content of scheme, and their targeting and implementation procedures. Only a few have been taken up entirely on the initiative of state. However, up to the 1970s none of these programmes comprehensively covered the whole country, though in certain parts of the country some of these programmes operated simultaneously for the same target group. Apart from this territorial overlap, the major limitation of these programmes was that they were reduce to mere subsidy-giving programmes, lacking any planned approach to enable the rural poor to achieve a higher level of income. The element of adhocism in these programmes further reduced their effectiveness from the point of view of poverty alleviation. Hence, the need was felt for undertaking programmes which were not only far more comprehensive in covering but could also make a direct assault on rural poverty.

In view of the above IRDP, NREP and RLEGP were conceived during the 1980s, aimed at achieving the objective of poverty alleviation. Initially, the IRDP was started only in 2300 development blocks as a programme of development. But later on during the Sixth Plan it was extended to the entire country. However, the IRDP concerned as anti-poverty programmes aimed at helping the small and marginal farmers, landless labours and artisans. It was thought by the planners that these people were poor, because they possessed neither any productive assets nor any special skills. Therefore, IRDP was designed to help the poor by creating new assets for them. The basic strategy was self employment of the poor with the help of these assets so that they could ménage to earn enough to rise above the poverty line.

1.4.2 Poverty Alleviation Programmes in the Reform Period

For the purpose of poverty alleviation, several special programmes for employment generation are being implemented both in the rural and urban areas during the reform period. These programmes provide employment to the targeted poor, enhance their income and generate assets for poor families. The following are the major programmes which have been adopted during the reform period:

i) **Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS):** This was launched from 2nd Oct' 1993 in 1778 development blocks in the rural areas of 261 Districts. The main objective of this scheme is to provide profitable employment of not less than 100 days to every desirous person aged between 18 years and 60 years during the lean agricultural season. Also, to create economic infrastructure and community projects in order to supply sufficient employment and development activities. EAS is a demand-driven programmes.

ii) **Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana (PMRY):** PMRY was also introduced on 2nd Oct' 1993. Under this scheme every educated unemployed youth in the age group of 18-40 years and having a family income below Rs. 40,000 is provided a loan up to Rs. 1 lakh for opening his own enterprise and Rs. 2 lakh for other activities. During 1993-94 this scheme was implemented only in the urban areas but since April 1994 it has been implemented both in urban and rural areas.

iii) **National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP):** The NSAP was launched in August 1995. It has three components: a) National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS), b) National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and c) National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS). The NSAP is a centrally sponsored programme that aims at ensuring a minimum national standard of social assistance over and above the assistance that the states provide from their own resource. The NOAPS provides a monthly pension of Rs. 75 to destitute BPL person over the age of 65. The NFBS is a scheme for BPL families who are given Rs. 10,000 in the event of the death of the breadwinner. The NMBS provides Rs.500 to support the nutritional intake for pregnant women.

iv) **Swarna Jayanti Sahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY):** SJSRY has been operational since December 1997. This scheme provides gainful employment to the urban unemployed and underemployed poor by encouraging the setting up of self-employment ventures and provision wage employment.

v) **Swarna Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY):** SGSY was launched in April 1999 after the restructuring of the erstwhile IRDP and an allied scheme. It is the only self-employment programme currently being implemented. It is conceived as a holistic programme for micro-enterprises covering all aspects of self-employment. Its objective is to bring the assisted Swarozgaris above the poverty line by providing them with income generating assets through bank credit and Government subsidies. Since its inception and up to April 2004, a total allocation of Rs 6734 crore was made available by the center and states. Out of this Rs. 4980 crore have been utilized up to April 2004, hence benefiting 45.67 lakh swarozgaris. However, SGSY is funded by the center and states in the ratio of 75:25.

vi) **Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY):** PMGY was launched in 2000-01 in all states and union territories in order to achieve the objective of sustainable human development at the village level. PMGY initially had five components viz. primary health, primary education, rural shelter, rural drinking water and nutrition. Rural electrification was added as an additional component in 2001-02. The Planning Commission is carrying out both financial and physical monitoring of this programme.

vii) **Antyodaya Anna Yojana:** AAY was launched in 2000. The scheme aims at providing food security to poor families. Under this scheme 1 crore of the poorest of the BPL families covered under the targeted PDS (Public Distribution System) are identified and 25 kg of food grains was made available to each of the eligible families at a highly subsidized rate of Rs. 2 per kg for wheat and Rs. 3 per kg for the rice. The quantity has been

increased from 25 to 340 kg since April 2000. The scheme was further expanded in June 2003 by adding another 50 lakh to BPL families.

viii) Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY): The PMGSY was launched in December 2000 to provide road connectivity to 1.6 lakh of unconnected habitation with a population of 500 persons more in rural areas by the end of Tenth Plan Period. It is being executed in all the states and union territories of India.

ix) Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana (VAMBAY): The VAMBAY was launched in December 2001 to ameliorate the conditions of the urban slum-dwellers living below the poverty line without adequate shelter. The scheme has the primary objective of facilitating the construction and upgrading of dwelling units for slum dwellers and providing a healthy and enabling urban environment.

x) Sampurna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY): SGRY was launched in September 2001 by merging the ongoing scheme of Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) and the Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS). The objective of this programme is to provide additional wage employment in the rural area and also food security, along with the creation of durable community, social and economic infrastructure in rural areas. This programme is open to all rural poor who are in the need of wage employment and desire to do manual and unskilled work in and around the village. The scheme is implemented through Panchayat Raj Institution. The scheme envisages the generation of 100 crore man-days of employment in a year.

xi) Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY): IAY aims to provide dwelling units, free of cost to the Schedule Caste (SCs), Schedule Tribe (STs) and free bonded labourers and also to non- SC/ST BPL families in rural areas. It is funded on cost sharing basis in the ratio of 75:25 between the center and states. Up to January 2006, about 138 lakh houses had been constructed or upgraded with an expenditure of Rs. 25,208 crore.

xii) National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS): Recently, in 2006, Government has initiated the scheme. The objective of the Act is to enhance livelihood security of the people in rural areas by generating wage employment through works that develop the infrastructure base of that area. As per NREGS, the government will provide 100 days of employment per year to whosoever is willing to work. NREGP is considered as a landmark program in poverty alleviation measures.

1.5 An overview of Poverty in Arunachal Pradesh

Since the 1960s, considerable research has been done on poverty levels and trends across the country, but, in Arunachal, very little research has been done in this area, and the limited information that is available makes it difficult to estimate the extent and intensity of poverty prevalent here even today. Some attempts have been made to quantify and assess poverty, but, these estimates have various shortcomings.

1.5.1 Estimates made by Planning Commission

According to the Planning Commission estimates, 39.35 per cent people of Arunachal Pradesh were living Below the Poverty Line (BPL) in 1993-94. In the course of the next few years, poverty declined. In 1999-2000, 33.47 per cent of the people were estimated to be under the poverty line (NHDR 2001).

1.5.2 Estimates made by the Directorate of Rural Development

A poverty estimate made by the Directorate of Rural Development, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, showed that 54 per cent of families in rural Arunachal Pradesh were poor in 1992-93, and this percentage increased to 78 per cent in 1997-98, an increase of 24 per cent in the course of five years. The estimates show a high degree of inter-district variation in poverty, from 21 per cent in Changlang, to 79 per cent in Lower Subansiri in 1992-93. The picture changed unexpectedly in the next five years. According to these estimates, the

poverty ratios in Arunachal increased substantially during the 1992-93 to 1997-98 period, and the inter-district variation continued to be high. In 1997-98, East Kameng had the lowest incidence of poverty (49 per cent), while Upper Subansiri recorded a poverty ratio which was nearly twice as high (97 per cent). During this period, the poverty ratio increased from 25 to 87 per cent in West Kameng, a rise of 62 per cent. In Changlang, it increased from 21 per cent to 80 per cent. On the other hand, poverty declined from 75 per cent to 49 per cent in East Kameng. In Upper Subansiri, poverty rose from 61 to 97 per cent in the course of five years. These estimates of poverty do not match those of other experts. There is also no plausible explanation for the inter-district as well as the temporal variation of poverty. Since the Government has been implementing many poverty alleviation programmes, a negative relationship is expected between poverty, and the level of income. Similarly, a negative relationship is expected between the growth of income, and the change in the poverty level (Arunachal Pradesh HDR 2005).

Check Your Progress

1. What is Poverty? How it is measured?
2. What are the causes of poverty?
3. Discuss the various poverty eradication programmes initiated by the Government of India.
4. As per the estimation made by the National Sample Survey, which social group has the highest percentage of poverty in India?

1.6 Unemployment

Along with poverty, unemployment is also widespread in India. It is indeed, common to all the countries of the world whether they are industrially advanced or not. An international labour expert commented; [in September 1992]- "About 400 million new workers are expected to enter the world's labour force this decade and prospects of finding jobs for all of them are gloomy".

The Finnish director of the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) employment department, Juhani Lonroth, has said in one of his speech that "*the population of working age in the world will grow by 700 million people in the 1990s. With the conserving assumption that 55% of this people will seek employment, about 400 million jobs have to be created to absorb the new entrants. Unfortunately, the prospects of achieving this job creation are not yet very bright*". The problem is, of course, more acute for Asian countries rather than for the African and Latin American countries because of the serious explosion of these countries. India thus cannot be an exception.

What is unemployment? - In simple sense, unemployment is said to exist when people are willing to work at going wages but cannot find jobs. In other words, unemployment is largely concern with those men and women who constitute the labour force of the country, who are able-bodied and willing to work, but are not gainfully employed. According to **C.B Mamoria**, "unemployment is state of worklessness for a man fit and willing to work, that is, it is a condition of involuntary and not voluntary idleness". According to **D. Mello** "a condition in which an individual is not in a state of remunerative occupation despite his desire to do so". **Nava Gopal Das**, described unemployment as a "condition of involuntary idleness". The Planning Commission of India has described a person as "marginally unemployed" when he/she remains without work for six months in a year. Against this, the ILO considers that person as 'employed' who remained with work for 15 hours (two days) in a week (of five days). This definition may be accepted in a developed country which provides social security to the unemployed but it cannot be accepted in a developing country like India which has no Unemployment Insurance Scheme.

Unemployment has three elements: 1. An individual should be capable of working, 2. An individual should be willing to work, and 3. An individual must make an effort to find work. On this basis, a person who is physically or mentally disabled or who is chronically ill and unable to work cannot be included in the definition of unemployed person. A society is believed to be in a "condition of full employment" if the period of enforced idleness remains minimum. A society with full employment has four characteristics; i) an individual takes very little time to find remunerative work according to his capabilities and qualifications, ii) he is sure of finding remunerative work, iii) the number of vacant jobs in the society exceeds the number of job seekers, and iv) work is available on 'adequate remuneration'.

1.7 The magnitude of unemployment in India

Though the problem of unemployment is growing in an unmanageable proportion we do not have authentic information regarding the exact number of unemployed persons in India. It is regrettable that institutions such as Planning Commission, National Sample Survey, and the Central Statistical Organisation (or the Indian Statistical Institute) have not made any systematic and satisfactory attempt to collect authentic information about unemployment.

We have however, three sources to collect some statistics regarding the extent of unemployment in India. They are – (i) The National Census which held once in ten years; (ii) the National Sample Survey; (iii) the Employment Exchange Registrations. Of these, the information collected through the national sample survey is being used widely.

The statistic which we obtain through these three sources cannot be considered as highly authentic and foolproof. Many a times, they are treated to be only as approximation and rough estimates. These estimates very often take into consideration the number of persons registered in the employment exchange and these exchanges cover mainly the urban areas. Rural areas are not covered by them. Since registration with the employment exchange is voluntary, all the unemployed do not go for registrations. Further some people who are already in some ordinary jobs also go for registration for they intend to secure some good jobs. These exchanges may not supply full information about people who are 'unemployed'.

1.7.1 Estimate of Unemployment by National Sample Survey (NSS)

The table no. 3.1 below presents the all India unemployment rates for 1983, 1993-94 and 1999-00. The data is also broken down by gender and by location (rural/urban). Two robust facts emerge from the table. Unemployment rates in the urban sector are higher than in the rural sector. While urban rates are in the range 8-9.5%, rural rates are about one percentage point lower fluctuating in the range 7-8%. The second feature is that female unemployment rates are markedly higher than that for males in urban areas while they match that for males in the rural sector. Urban female unemployment rates have ranged between 9.5-11% as compared to the 7-9% range for males. In the rural sector, while the unemployment rate for women in 1983 was higher than that of males by more than one percentage point, the rates became similar in later years.

While there is not much variation in the unemployment rate across sectors in 1999-00, there is considerable variation across states. Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh have unemployment rates much lower than the national average, ranging between 4% to 6%. Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Maharashtra and Orissa have unemployment that is close to the national average. Finally, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal have rates far in excess of the national average with unemployment in Kerala being greater than 20%.

Table 3.1: All India Unemployment Rate (%)

	1999-00		1993-94		1983	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
All	7.24		6.03		8.28	
All	7.08	7.79	5.61	7.43	7.93	9.53
Males	7.09	7.45	5.64	6.72	7.51	9.22
Females	7.03	9.42	5.55	10.52	8.98	11.01

Source: The NSS survey in 1999-00 and 1993-94

1.8 Types of unemployment

We may speak of different types of unemployment such as the following:

- 1 Seasonal unemployment:** Seasonal unemployment is very much associated with agricultural sector and certain manufacturing units like sugar and ice factories. The nature of work in sugar factory is such that the workers have to remain out of work for about six months in a year.
- 2 Agricultural unemployment:** Agricultural unemployment is caused on account of a number of factors. First, the landholdings are so small that even the family members of the working age-group are not absorbed by the land. Second, the nature of work is seasonal. Broadly speaking, a cultivator in India remains unemployed for about four to six months in a year. According to the Land Revenue Commission appointed in Bengal, a cultivator (in Bengal) remains unemployed for about six months in a year. The Economists have estimated that of the total population in the rural areas, 29.4 per cent people are self-supporting, 59 per cent are non-earning dependents and 11.6 per cent are earning dependents. This means that 29.4 per cent people not only support themselves but they also support themselves but they also support the remaining 70.6 per cent people as well.
- 3 Cyclical unemployment:** This is caused because of the ups and downs in trade and business. When the entrepreneurs earn high profits, they invest them in business which increases employment but when they get less profit or suffer from losses or their products remain unsold and pile up, they reduce the numbers of workers in their industries which causes unemployment. A boom is generated when investments exceed savings, and similarly a depression results when saving exceeds investment. This is probably an oversimplification of the concept of cyclical unemployment but still it is essentially true.
- 4 Industrial unemployment:** It is caused because of a large-scale migration of people from rural to urban areas, losses incurred by industries, slow growth of industries, competition with foreign industries, unplanned industrialization, defective industrial policies, labour strikes or employers' lockouts, rationalization, and so on.
- 5 Technological unemployment:** It is caused due to the introduction of automation or other technological changes in industry or other work places. It is also caused due to the reduction in manpower necessary to produce a finished product. Through out the course of economic development, particularly since the industrial revolution, man has been forced to adjust himself to the process of mechanization. An increase in mechanical skills has both its advantages as well as its disadvantages. Machine production has multiplied the number of commodities consumed by an average man. This has meant a constantly rising standard of material comfort and a concomitant increase in the consumption of luxury goods. Certain items which were at one time considered as luxury items for one class of people have today become items of necessity for them. On the other hand, the industry has diminished an average man's economic security since every advance in technology has meant a displacement of human level. In fact, some new inventions do more than merely displace labour. They create poverty which results from the destruction of old investment, therefore, restricts the market for new production. A vicious circle is thus created. In the long

run it is true that technological improvement may increase employment in related service industries. Nevertheless, continued improvement in mechanical devices mean that employment opportunities have to increase proportionately or there will be an added residue of unemployment.

- 6 **Frictional unemployment:** The unemployment which arises when workers shift from one job to another is called frictional unemployment. It arises under the condition of full employment in the economy.
- 7 **Educated unemployment or white collar unemployment:** In the urban areas, there is the special class emerges due to mere educational facilities in towns. The rate of unemployment is higher among the educated than among the uneducated persons. This is also perhaps due to the reason that the tertiary sector could not grow speedily to that extent to which the people are being educated in urban areas. The educational system is not outdated but also ill-planned which provide very little scope to cater the needs of the nation. In 1971, the total educated unemployment was recorded 22.9 lakhs against its number 5.79 lakhs in 1961. The number of persons registered in the employment exchange was 346.3 lakhs on 31st December, 1990, which further increase to 371.20 lakhs on August 1992. they all run after white collar jobs which result great scramble for clerical jobs only. Other pursue for higher education with the sole objective of improving their employment prospects.

The irrelevant of the educational system is also manifest in the rise in the rate of unemployment among the educated youth. During 1965-1977 the number of unemployed graduate rose at the rate of 21 percent annually (from 9 lakh in 1965 to 5.6 million in 1977), then, during 1980-88, their number rose at the rate of 23 percent every year, and between January 1988 and January 1989, the percentage increase by 19.2. The educated job seekers (matriculation and above) constitute over 60 percent of the registered unemployed. According to the planning commission, the number of educated unemployed in our country in 1992 was 7 million.

1.9 Causes of unemployment

The problem of unemployment is becoming a colossal one. Various factor, individual as well as social, have caused this problem. Here the causation is not one sided. For example, unemployment is often the cause of poverty and some other times its consequences also. Hence tracing the causes of unemployment is a difficult task. Earlier, scholars believed more in economic factors but many now maintained that unemployment cannot be ascribed only to economic factors. Below are the basic factors which causes unemployment:

- i) **Age factor:** Age factors fixes limitations on the range of choice of job opportunities. Too young and too old people are not eligible for many of the jobs. Some young people due to their inexperience and some old people due to their old age fail to get some jobs. Young people do not get jobs soon after their studies so have to wait. People who are above 50 or 60 years are less adaptable and more prone to accident. Their capacity to contribute to economic production is also relatively less.
- ii) **Vocational unfitness:** Many of our young people do not have a [proper understanding of their own aptitudes, abilities and interests on the one hand, and the task or job or carrier they want to pursue, on the other. If willingness to do some job is not allowed by the required abilities, one cannot find a job of one's selection. Employer is always looking forward to find persons who have the ability, experience, interest and physical fitness to work. Sometimes, there may be more men trained in a particular profession than required. The demand is less than the supply and hence the unemployment.
- iii) **Illness and /or physical disabilities or incapacities:** Due to the inborn or acquired disabilities and deficiencies some remain as partially employed or totally unemployed throughout their life. Illness induced by industrial condition and fatal accident that always take place during the work may render a few other people as unemployed.

- iv) **Population explosion:** The population in India is growing at an alarming rate. Every year India adds to her population 120 to 130 lakh people afresh. More than this, every year about 5 million people become eligible for securing jobs. All these people who are work are not getting the jobs. Hence, the population explosion in India is problem of unemployment more and more dangerous.
- v) **Technological Advance- mechanism-automation:** Technological advancement undoubtedly contributes to economic development. But unplanned and uncontrolled growth of technology may have an adverse effect on job opportunities. Since industrialists are more interested in maximizing production and profit they prefer to introduce labour- saving machines. They always search for ways and means of reducing the cost of production and hence go after computerization, automation, etc. the result is technological unemployment and this state of affairs is very much in evidence in Indian context today.
- vi) **Defect in Educational System:** Our system of education which appears like a remnant of the British colonial rule in India has its own irreparable defects and its contribution to the problem of unemployment can hardly be exaggerated. There is no co-ordination between our industrial growth, agricultural development and our educational system. Our education does not prepare the minds of our young men to become self- employed; on the contrary, it makes them to depend on government to find for them some jobs.
- vii) **Geographical Immobility:** It means there is surplus labour in one place and inadequate labour in another place, when people refuse to move from one region to other. The immobility may be due to the lack of information regarding the availability of jobs in other cities or because of the language problem or family responsibilities.
- viii) **Lack of vocational guidance and training facilities:** As, already discussed, our education system is defective as it purely provides academic and bookish knowledge which is not job oriented. The need of the hour is that there much be sufficient number of technical training institution and other job oriented courses at village level. Most of the student remain ignorant of possible avenues of employment and choice of occupation but it is stark reality that without vocational guidance one fails avail the opportunity according to requirement.
- ix) **Regional disparities:** Regional imbalances are another cause of unemployment in the country. Some regions which are backward face the acute shortage of other pre-requisite infra-structure while on the other, which are advance, possessed, sufficient resources. This disparity is largely responsible for slow growth of employment opportunities in backward regions.
- x) **Defective social system:** The defective social system of the country also adds fuel to the seriousness of the problem. People are still superstitious and illiterate who still believe that family planning is a great sin with the result population is increasing at a very high speed, it is equally difficult rather impossible to feed them with food, cloth and shelter.

1.10 Consequences

Unemployment affects an individual, family as well as society. In other words, unemployment causes personal disorganization, family disorganization and social disorganization.

From the point of view of personal disorganization, the unemployed person faces disillusionment and false easy prey to cynicism. Having no outlet to release their depression, young person tune their creative energies into wrong channels which explain the rise of the number of youthful bandits, highway robberies etc. most of the criminal are undoubtedly recruited from boys with a history of earlier delinquencies but there has been an increase in the number of daring criminals with the decrease in work opportunities. On the other hand, the plight of an earning person who loses job is equally sad. Ex-wage earner are more liable to physical illness, tension, crime

because lack of working opportunities makes it impossible for them to support their dependence. Some people in the state are even known to turn to unlawful activities like smuggling and dug trafficking rather than facing the actual situation.

Family disorganization because of unemployment is easy to measure. Unemployment affects the unity of interests of family members, the unity of objectives as well as the unity of personal ambition. The disharmonious functioning of the members creates discord within family, which means that not only do the tensions between the unemployed husband and wife increase but conflicts between parents and children also arise. Sometimes the wife of an unemployed person want to take up a job but the idea of a wife taking up a job irritates the husband with traditional and conservative values do much so that there is tremendous conflict with in the home. Many husbands object to any substantial assumption of authority by their wives in the fields which they (husbands) considered traditionally their own. On the other hand, the conflict between may arise when the unemployed husband wants his wife to take up a job and the wife is reluctant to do so because of the presence of small children at home.

Social disorganization cause by unemployment is hard to measure. Social disorganization is a break-down of the social structure. Old forms of social control do not function effectively. Social relationship between members of the group is broken or dissolved. The activities of the unemployed are some restricted and their attitudes so bitter that in this phase of disillusionment and discouragement that they loss their desire to work and their skills may deteriorate with a resultant loss to the whole community (Colcord, 1941).

1.11 Indebtedness

The tribal indebtedness in form of bonded labour, is known by different names in different parts of India. For example, in Rajasthan, it is called *Sagri*, in Orissa, it is known by *Gothi*, in Andhra Pradesh, it is called *Vetti*, in Mysore, it is known as *Geetha or Jetha*, in Madhya Pradesh, it is called *Naukri Nama, Mahidari*, etc.

The chronic indebtedness has been and still is probably the most difficult problem facing almost the entire tribal population of India. Consequently one of the worst forms of exploitation to which the tribal people are exposed is through traditional money lending. Barring certain areas in the North-East region which were closed to the middlemen and contractors during British rule, indebtedness is quite widespread and crushing among the entire Indian tribe.

The chronic indebtedness of the tribal people is certainly due to rampant poverty and deficit economy. Reliable ethnographic evidence prove that the tribal people were certainly not that much handicapped in their struggle for living a carefree life when their place of habitation were isolated and devoid of middlemen and contractors. They were living in self-sufficient economic conditions. Forest wealth was at their disposal to sustain themselves. But unfortunately when their abode were thrown open as a result of economic development all around, they found themselves completely ill-equipped to enjoy the fruits of development. Outsiders, the so called civilized people, exploited their vulnerability in the absence of any concerted efforts on the part of administration. With the passage of time, their plight continued to worsen and they have been reduced to the position in which we find them today.

Although we have little scientific data about the extent of their indebtedness, it is obvious that the size of the problem is enormous. Indebtedness among them does not have only economic dimensions but social and psychological too. For a large number, happiness and peace desert them, for others it makes the entire system impervious to hope. In many areas it leads to bondedness due to the debt descending from father to son and even to the successive generations.

In Uttar Pradesh, especially in Jaunsar Bawar region of DehraDun district, the bonded labour system is quite common among the Kolta community. In Jammu and Kashmir, this bonded labour system, *Jana Manjhi* of Ijhari, has been reported from the Poonch region where a person engages himself by a written or oral agreement to work as a labourer for his creditor as long as the loan remains unpaid. In Maharastra among the tribals, the *Dhorkoli, Ketkari, Worli, Bhil*, in Thana and Nasik district, the bonded labour system *Vetor Begar* is quite common. In south India, the tribal indebtedness especially in the form bonded labour system has been reported from among the *Paniyans* of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. A study made on the tribes of Bihar indicates that about 75 percent tribal families were indebted. In Assam, about 28 percent of the tribals in Jantia Hills, 17 percent in Mikir Hills and 39 percent in Diphu were indebted. In West Bengal, it is called *Dadan* where a man receives advance payment either in cash or in kind. In return, however, he has to serve the money lender whenever asked for. A study of indebtedness conducted in West Bengal indicates that about 67 percent of the studied tribal families were indebted.

Among a large number of tribal people indebtedness has become unavoidable and thus normal phenomenon of their existence. Following are some of the important reasons of indebtedness common to almost all the affected groups;

- 1 Loss of tribal rights over land and forests.
- 2 Poor and primitive mode of agriculture resulting in deficit supply of food grains.
- 3 Meager income of the tribal.
- 4 Ignorance of equitable price system.
- 5 Expenditure beyond their means due to extravagant spending on large scale celebrations on the occasions like birth, festivals, marriage, deaths etc.
- 6 Fatalist attitude and locally-oriented worldview.
- 7 Adherence to the Panchayat decisions regarding fines for fear of ex-communications.

Though some executive and legislative measures have been taken by the central and the state government to control the prevalence of bounded labour and tribal indebtedness but still there are many minor tribes like the *Birhors* of Bihar, the *Asurs*, the *Birjia* etc., where the study of indebtedness has not been carried out and we do not have statistical figures to support it but we know that money lending is strongly found among them through the back door and for fear of further exploitation, they don't reveal the truth.

The Fifth Schedule of the Constitution empowers the Governor of a state to regulate the carrying on of the business as moneylender by persons who lend money to members of STs in Scheduled areas. In pursuance of this provision various state governments have promulgated and enacted various Laws and Acts. Following are some of the important Laws and Acts from different states to control money-lending, debt redemption and abolition of debt bondage:

- 1) The Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Areas Moneylenders Regulation, 1963.
- 2) The Agency Debt Bondage Abolition, 1964.
- 3) The Assam Moneylenders Regulation, 1968.
- 4) The Bihar Moneylenders (Regulation of Transaction) Act, 1939.
- 5) The Bombay Agricultural Debtors Relief Act, 1947.
- 6) The Kerala Moneylending Act, 1958.
- 7) The Rajasthan *Sagri* System Abolition Act, 1961.

Check your progress

1. What is unemployment? Discuss its types.
2. What are the causes and consequences of unemployment?
3. What is indebtedness? Discuss its causes and consequences?
4. As per National Sample Survey, what is the total percentage of rural-urban unemployment scenario in India during 1999-2000.

1.12 Migration

Migration is an important feature of human civilization. It reflects human endeavour to survive in the most testing conditions both natural and man made. Migration in India is in existence historically.

Much of the earlier literature on migration has been preoccupied with 'development-induced' economic migration which resulted from unequal development trajectories (McDowell and De Haan, 1997; Kothari, 2002). This supposedly led to one-way population movements from less-endowed areas to well-endowed prosperous areas through the 'push' created by poverty and a lack of work and the 'pull' created by better wages in the destination (Lee, 1966). Ideas of seasonal and circular labour migration were first articulated in the 1970s (Nelson, 1976; Rao, 1994) and defined as 'characteristically short term, repetitive or cyclical in nature and adjusted to the annual agricultural cycle'.

There are different definitions and explanations for the motivation that compels people to migrate. At one extreme there is 'involuntary' migration. This denotes extreme economic and often social hardships and is undertaken mostly by landless or land-poor, unskilled and illiterate poor labourers. Here people do not have any choice of the place or type of work that they undertake. Migration for survival is well documented in Andhra Pradesh (Ramana Murthy, 1991; Reddy 1990; Rao, 1994). Nearly all of the studies have identified the main drivers of migration as the worsening situation of dry land agriculture created by drought, crop failure and poor terms of trade.

Seasonal migration that is undertaken to improve the economic position of the household, or accumulative migration, is also being noted by recent research in India. For example Rao (2001) refers to three kinds of migration in his study of Ananthapur and Rayadurga districts in Andhra Pradesh. First type is migration for coping and survival. Second type is defined as migration for additional work/income. It takes place when the work in the village is over, normally after harvesting all crops. The third type is migration for better remuneration or a better work environment or opportunity to use skills or acquire new skills. They observe that there is a continuous transition between the different types. For instance, people from Rayadurga district were migrating for survival in the 1970s but changed to second type in the 1990s. In Anantapur they began with second type and moved on to third type.

We may say in other words that Migration is the movement of people from one place in the world to another for the purpose of taking up permanent or semi permanent residence, usually across a political boundary. An example of "semi permanent residence" would be the seasonal movements of migrant farm laborers. People can either choose to move ("voluntary migration") or be forced to move ("involuntary migration"). Migrations have occurred throughout human history, beginning with the movements of the first human groups from their origins in East Africa to their current location in the world.

Migration occurs at a variety of scales: intercontinental (between continents), intra continental (between countries on a given continent), and interregional (within countries). One of the most significant migration patterns has been rural to urban migration—the movement of people from the countryside to cities in search of opportunities.

Nevertheless, the dominant perception of migration among policy-makers, academics and officials in India continues to be that migration is only for survival and that migrants remain poor. The image of the migrant continues to be that of a powerless, impoverished and emaciated person who is trapped in poverty (Deshingkar, Pand Daniel Start, 2003).

1.13 Push and Pull Factor of Migration

Push and pull factors are those factors which either forcefully push people into migration or attract them. A push factor is forceful and a factor which relates to the country from which a person migrates. It is generally some problem which results in people wanting to migrate. A pull factor is a flaw or distress that drives a person away from a certain place. A pull factor is something concerning the country to which a person migrates. It is generally a benefit that attracts people to a certain place. Push and pull factors are usually considered as north and south poles on a magnet. Push factors may be because of the following reasons; not enough jobs, few opportunities, "primitive" conditions, desertification, famine/drought, political fear/persecution, poor medical care, loss of wealth, natural disasters, death threats, slavery, pollution, poor housing, landlords etc.

The reasons for Migration in relation to Pull factor may be job opportunities, better living conditions, political and/or religious freedom, enjoyment, education, better medical care, security, family links, industry, etc.

1.14 Causes of Migration

Migration in India is mostly influenced by Social Structures and pattern of development. The development policies by all the governments since Independence have accelerated the process of migration. Uneven development is the main cause of Migration. Added to it, are the disparities, Inter regional and amongst different socio-economic classes. The landless poor who mostly belong to lower castes, tribal communities and economically backward regions constitute the major portion of Migrants. In the very large Tribal Regions of India intrusion of outsiders, settlements by the outsiders displacing the local tribal people and deforestation also played a major role in Migration.

The Indian daily Hindustan Times on 14th October 2007, revealed that according to a study by a Government Institute, 77% of the population i.e. nearly 840 million Indians live on less than Rs.20 (40 cents) a day. Indian agriculture became non remunerative, taking the lives of 100,000 peasants during the period from 1996 to 2003, i.e. a suicide of an Indian peasant every 45 minutes. Hence, the rural people from the downtrodden and backward communities and backward regions such as Bihar, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh travel to far distances seeking employment at the lowest rungs in construction of roads, irrigation projects, commercial and residential complexes, in short, building the "Shining" India.

The pull factors of higher wages caused external migration to the middle-east countries by skilled and semiskilled workers. Migration of professionals such as Engineers, Medical Practitioners, Teachers and Managers to developed countries constitute a small fraction of the total migrants

1.15 Magnitude of Migration

Migration in India is predominantly short distance with around 60% of migrants changing their residences within their district of birth and 20% within their state (province), while the rest move across the state boundaries. The total migrants as per the census of 1971 are 167 million persons, 1981 census 213 millions, 1991 census 232 million and 2001 census 315 millions. As per the census of the year 1991, nearly 20 million people migrated to other states seeking livelihood. Within a decade, the number of inter state migration doubled to 41,166,265 persons as per the census figures of 2001. It is estimated that, the present strength of inter state migrants is around 80 million persons of which, 40 million are in the construction industry, 20 million as domestic workers, 2 million as sex workers, 5 million as call girls and somewhere from half a million to 12 million in the illegal mines otherwise called as "small scale mines".

It is estimated that at present around five and a half million Indians are working in the oil exporting countries of middle-east and another 2 millions in the developed world. 92% of the domestic workers are women, girls and children and 20% of these females are under 14 years of age, as per a study conducted by an organization called "Social Alert". There is a perceptible phenomenon in this migration, that is, the tremendous increase of women workers migrating either individually or in groups to find work. They are travelling very long distances even for short-term employment, in the absence of any prospect or promise of employment, still they are migrating. This is a disturbing trend, as in the event of not getting employment, they end up as victims of sexual abuse. Even if they get employment, they have to work under inhuman conditions.

1.16 An overview of Tribal Migration

Deep emotional attachment with one's native place or traditional habitat has been a universal phenomenon. Simple societies or primitive groups are more attached with their land because of their traditional relative isolation. Thus, one may safely conclude that migration does not, usually, take place under normal circumstances.

Migration is not an old practice among the tribal communities. The possibilities and avenues of migration have increased only with the advent of fast and easy means of transport and communication. The tribal migration may be understood from two angles. The first through pushed out factors and the second is pulled into factors that force the tribal to leave their lands. In the first category come such factors as socio-economic exploitation, starvation, diseases and natural calamities like drought, flood, epidemics etc. In the second category come attraction of employment, better income, and better living condition. Sometimes, the migration is the result of both these types of factors and a number of tribes have migrated to cities, townships and other far off places.

Tribal migration is not a recent phenomenon and the examples of the tribes of Bihar and Bengal like Oraon, Santhal, Ho, Munda etc. going over to the tea plantations of north Bengal and Assam bear testimony to this fact. But an organized type of migration through the middle men and the contractors is definitely a new phenomenon not going back beyond 20-25 years. The enclaves of prosperity and green revolution have been attracting the poor and exploited tribal. There has been a large scale migration to Punjab, Haryana, and Delhi from the tribes of Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal; because of disturbed conditions in Punjab migration to its big farms along with along with the Haryana's has virtually come to an end but migration to other regions continues. Previously it was largely 'seasonal migration' but of late the tendency of 'permanent migration' is small visible. According to the surveys undertaken by the concern agencies and the newspaper reports the plight of many tribal migrants is not good. They have fallen victim to all sorts of exploitation including sexual abuse. Many of them are made addicted to opium or other narcotics by the landlords or brick kiln owners and are forced to work for prolonged hours against legal wages.

A number of social scientists are of the view that migration is a natural and rational phenomenon in which migration takes place from the labour surplus areas to the labour deficient areas. Whatever may be the interpretations the fact remains that the tribal people are much vulnerable to exploitation than the other segment of the society. One of the reasons of it is that they are not organized but wherever they become united and get radical leadership they are able to fight exploitation (Hasnain, 2001).

1.17 Impact of Urbanization and Industrialization

No doubt that in developing countries and more so in India, the pace of social change has rapidly accelerated in the recent past. Social change has become an inseparable component of every society. The traditional tribal society, which prior to independence of India, was almost a close system, suddenly became exposed to the forces released by the Community Development Movement, Urbanization, Industrialization, Education and Technology, in short, to the process of modernization. This brought the tribal society in contact with wider society.

In India, agriculture is considered to be the principal occupation. So the cultural tradition, custom, beliefs are mainly centered around agricultural practices. But at present, in some areas, industrialization and urbanization separately or jointly, have put pressure on the traditional societies bringing an adaptive change. All the changes are not identified in a technical way and sometimes the changing process or the patterns of change are not readily discernible. In this connection, the issues of 'tradition-modernity' dichotomy in the context of adaptability to industrial-urban milieu have been an interesting social-cultural research problem.

Anthropologists have suggested various models to understand the process of integration of the tribals to the mainstream of Indian life. Majumdar and Madan (1986) viewed the problem of tribal integration in the context of the local needs of the tribals. Another dimension has been added by Redfield (1947) who has conceptualized 'Folk-Urban continuum'. It is generally contended that the impact of industrialization on an underdeveloped society may not necessarily bring about any disintegration in the traditional structure. But there are specific anthropological studies which have not quite toed the same line. Orans (1965), for example, has made an attempt to show the impact of Jamshedpur urban and industrial environment on the traditional Santal, which do not always prove beneficial to them. Vidyarthi (1970) gives an account of the 'Socio-Economic Implications of Industrialization' in the Tribal Belt of Bihar'. He reported how the traditional features were reduced with the emergence of the industrial complex.

The first wake of industrialization was felt in Chotanagpur with the exploitation of the coal mining industry in Jharia, Bokaro and Karanpura coal fields in Dhanbad district in 1856 and the installation of Tata Iron and Steel Factory in Jamshedpur in Singhbhum district in 1907. These twin industries of coal and iron marked the beginning of the large-scale exploitation of minerals and other industrial resources of Chotanagpur. With the world's largest deposit of mica, and India's largest deposit of coal, iron, copper and adequate quantities of bauxite, limestone, phyllite, chromite, asbestos, graphite, kyanite and steatite, Chotanagpur has attracted thousands of tribals excluding the immigrants from outside to work in the various types of mining as well as mineral-based industries.

Chotanagpur has been in the grip of an Industrial Revolution and this has led to a too rapid urbanization, comparatively in a short span of time, leading this region to an "industry based explosion". Such an "explosion in the heart of the tribal belt of the middle India has led to cultural mutation" (Rao, 1966:3) and the once isolated, homogenous folk and primitive communities are exposed and thrown open to get assimilated in the global network of urban-industrial civilization. Such a situation of cultural mutation among tribal communities of Chotanagpur and neighbouring areas of Orissa created by the industrial urban-explosion has been studied by a number of anthropologists like Vidyarthi (1970), in 1958-59 by T.R. Sharma, in 1959-60 by J.S. Tondon, Rajendra Singh (1967), J. Sarkar (1970) and Das Gupta (1973).

From the longitudinal study of the Heavy Industrial complex near Ranchi (Vidyarthi, 1971), it is evident that the pre-industrial setting of the Hatia industrial zone was characterized by "an all round homogeneity in terms of landscape, population, economy and a style of life". Demographically, the tribals were the largest single group in these villages forming three-fourths of the population and most of them depended on agricultural activities while the rest depended on weaving, basket-making and other such activities.

At the formulatory stage of industrialization, the problem of land acquisition and rehabilitation of the uprooted villagers had to be tackled. These agricultural people, when uprooted, had to face manifold problems. The first was regarding their alternative place for their rehabilitation as well as an alternative occupation to earn their livelihood. Though these affected families were given reasonable compensation they had to face numerous social problems, cultural crisis, economic disorganization and social disorganization. The problems of their rehabilitation were not tackled with adequate foresight and planning and they continued to lead a life of disequilibrium.

During the formulatory and constructive phases of industrialization, Hatia could remain the only surviving village (nearest to the factory site) and it emerged as the most important business centre for meeting the day-to-day requirements of the migrant and slum labourer. The folk and rural traits of village Hatia got mixed up with numerous urban-industrial characteristics owing to the advent of a new way of life. On the whole, all these commercial and industrial developments in Hatia greatly disturbed the homogenous and rural style of life of the village. Ideals, language and population food habits and dress pattern, social and religious outlook and for that matter, the entire way of life were characterized by heterogeneity and industrial outlook as the people from different cultural backgrounds came to live in this semi-urbanized village.

Village Hatia before 1958 was characterized by isolation, homogeneity, collective life style, was thus affected by the first wave of industrialization. Though, with the coming of the industrial township and the completion of the construction work, the situation in Hatia has partly changed. The village, however, for all practical purposes, has become part of the industrial complex. The income of the villagers has gone high and now they have learnt to lead a heterogeneous style of life in terms of language, religion and social ethics. In general, it is now providing a good example of blending of rural and industrial "life style".

The other two industrial centre, the Patratu Thermal Power Project and the Bokaro Steel Plant are located in, a more or less, Hinduised and agriculturally advanced area of Chotanagpur. These two industrial complexes were studied by Rajendra Singh (1967) and Sarkar (1970) and the studies show that the impact so far felt is only in terms of disintegration of traditional culture, the rehabilitation of the uprooted villagers and the trends of the emerging industrial society.

The process of industrialization, has however, not affected the traditional core of the social structure of the neighbouring villages so far. In spite of the fact that some of the villagers had to leave their home the family organization has not been much affected.

Related to the social customs, the religious beliefs and practices also reflect the minimum transformation. The religious institutions of the Hindus, Muslims and Tribals co-exist. The annual festivals and their celebrations at Patratu are joined by all the castes and tribes and they appear to be more integrated. In the political sphere the influence of the traditional leaders like the *Pahan* and the *Mahto* is diminishing and a band of educated and politically conscious leaders is fast emerging. The villagers working in the factories have been influenced by the labour leaders.

The traditional village institutions like the "Jajmani system", the cycle of festivals, rituals, the caste affiliations, etc have been completely disintegrated and an all round depression and despair seems to have affected the life of the uprooted villagers.

To be precise, the impact of industrialization on the tribals living in the city, the *bustee* and the neighbouring villages is somewhat different but need to be understood in the context of the tribal and non-tribal groups.

With all these processes, a set of forces has been released which are leading the tribal communities from the "phase of acculturation to that of accelerated cultural mutation". These forces may be enumerated as (i) the development of communication within the tribal areas and with the outside world, (ii) introduction of monetized economy, (iii) spread of formal and modern education, (iv) extension of services by the modern institutions including medical and administrative aids, and (v) introduction of the advanced technology to exploit the mineral, forest, power and industrial resources.

All these forces are bringing about significant changes in the tribal areas but the rate of change evidently differs in the different types of tribal culture and sometimes at different points of time in the same continuum.

Check your Progress

1. What is Migration? Discuss the pull and push factors of Migration.
2. What are the causes of Migration? Discuss the magnitude of Migration.
3. Give an overview of Tribal Migration.
4. Discuss the impact of Urbanization and Industrialization on the tribal communities of India.

1.18 Land Alienation

As per Marx, in a Capitalist society an alienated man lives in an alienated nature and he performs estranged labour and the product of his labour becomes alien to him. Alienation as a concept is used by many social scientists in India, merely as a sociological phenomenon. Since land alienation is the crux of the depeasantization of the tribals, the concept assumes utmost importance in the analysis of tribal rights as a part of human rights discourse. The problem of land alienation is a much deeply connected phenomenon with full of contradictions related to the existing socio-economic order. The separation of land from the tribal communities can be understood in a more scientific way with the assistance of the theoretical formulations of the concept of alienation.

Alienation was defined by Hegel and was used by Marx to describe and criticise a social condition in

which man far from being the active initiation of the social world seemed more a passive object of determinate external processes. Marx says, alienation is fundamentally a particular relation of property, involving involuntary surrender to antagonistic 'other'. Alienation is inherent in exploitative relations of production and its nature varies with that of exploitation. Hence alienation's manifestation also differs among societies based on slavery, serfdom and capitalism etc. Thus, the concept of alienation may be interpreted to understand a specific problem of the tribals where *land* becomes the primordial source of exploitation and results in the creation of a society where exploitative production relations exist.

Tribal land alienation is the most important cause of the pauperization of tribal people, rendering their economic situation, which is extremely vulnerable even at the best of times, even more precarious. As evidently noted in many parts of India how the access of tribals to forests for their livelihoods has shrunk both because forests themselves have shrunk and because of the regulatory regime continues to restrict tribals from collecting and processing non-timber forest produce for their livelihoods. Shifting cultivation has also been severely restricted. The most important livelihood option of the tribal today is settled agriculture. However, as tribals are systematically deprived of their cultivable holdings by non-tribals and even by government itself, they are reduced to asset less destitution.

The Department of Rural Development, Government of India commissioned in 1997-98 a number of state-specific studies of the problem and reports were then received from Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Maharashtra.

The reports paint a grim and disturbing picture which confirms that massive alienation of tribal lands continues in tribal regions in all parts of the country. The magnitude of the problem can be assessed in the Andhra Pradesh report for instance, from the fact that today non-tribals own more than half the land in Scheduled Areas of the state. The figure is 52 per cent in Khamman district, 60 per cent in Adilabad district and 71 per cent in Warangal district. It may be noted that these are official figures based on land records and would not include 'benami' holdings in the name of tribals but held by non-tribals.

Let us take some example of land alienation by highlighting the tribal situation in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

The lush green jungles of the Eastern Ghats, spread over nine districts of Andhra Pradesh and comprising 11,595 sq. miles of the State, are no longer a secure haven for nearly 33 tribal communities, including seven primitive groups, inhabiting these highlands. In the four decades since Independence, the tribals have steadily lost their hold on much of this area. While many have lost their sources of livelihood, others have sought refuge in deep forests. According to the 1991 census, the region's tribal-non-tribal ratio had dropped to 2:1 from the 1950 proportion of 6:1. And this demographic change has been largely brought about by official policies. Though the amendments made to the land transfer regulations in the tribal belt by the government helped the tribals from losing their land, the non-tribals are holding almost 55 per cent of tribal lands either benami or through clandestine means. The setting up of minor and medium irrigation projects in areas meant for tribals has been another way to dispossess the locals. Although such projects came under tribal sub-plans, the emphasis was on cultivating crops alien to the Adivasis. For example, the tribal sub-plan for Warangal district was aimed at bringing 1.56 lakh hectares under cultivation, though tribals hold only 24,000 hectares. Apparently, the government has been sanctioning too many reservoirs, minor irrigation schemes, lift irrigation and medium canals in the tribal belt only to facilitate the cultivation of land occupied by people from the plains. While the non-tribal is holding the rich lands, the tribal has to depend on *podu* (hill slope) cultivation.

The continuing gravity of the problem in Madhya Pradesh has been assessed by the Census which reveals that the percentage of Scheduled Tribe cultivators to total Scheduled Tribe workers fell from 76.45 per cent in

1961 to 68.09 per cent in 1991. Correspondingly the percentage of Scheduled Tribe agricultural labourers to total Scheduled Tribe workers rose from 7.73 per cent to 25.52 per cent. Similar empirical evidence is available from other states as well.

1.19 Causes of Land Alienation

The studies commissioned by the Government of India have revealed the causal chain that leads to this state of affairs and confirmed that the fundamental reason for tribal land alienation is the fragile, constantly shrinking economic base of the tribals. Their traditional skills in the gathering of forest produce lost significance with the introduction of state ownership of forests, so that from food-gatherers they were reduced to wage-earners or encroachers. Private property in land extinguished the erstwhile right of tribal communities to free access to land in consonance with their needs. Settled agriculture brought with it its inevitable linkages with credit, inputs and markets, rendering the tribal even more dependent and vulnerable.

As the tribals have an innate fear based on bitter past experience of banks, cooperative institutions and other government sources of credit; they prefer the predictability of the moneylender despite his high interest rates. In any case, most banks and cooperative institutions are unwilling to provide consumption loans, and moneylenders are the only sources of consumption credit.

A combination of these factors leads to an extreme dependence on moneylenders on the part of the tribal, keeping him in perpetual debt and resulting in the mortgage and ultimate loss of his land. Though this phenomenon is common enough, another particularly tragic outcome of this indebtedness is the phenomenon of bondage, wherein people pledge their person and sometimes even that of their families against a loan. Repayments are computed in such terms that it is not unusual for bondage to persist until death, and to be passed on as a burden-some inheritance to subsequent generations. The practice of bonded labour is known by different names in different regions. In Rajasthan, it is called *Sagri*; in Andhra, *Vetti*; in Orissa, *Gothi*; in Karnataka, *Jetha* and in Madhya Pradesh, *Naukri Nama*.

It is also found that government policy itself has, directly or indirectly, contributed to the phenomenon of tribal land alienation in several occasions. It has been noted in several states that tribal land is being legally auctioned by co-operative credit societies and banks to recover dues. Auctioned land is purchased by non-tribals as well as rich tribals. Authorities responsible for regulating sale of tribal lands to non-tribals have been found to frequently collude with nontribals to defraud the tribal landowners. The same collusion has deprived tribals of their rights to land in times of land settlement, or implementation of laws giving ownership rights to occupancy tenants.

1.20 Form of Land Alienation

The first and foremost is the manipulation of land records. The unsatisfactory state of land records contributed a lot to the problem of land alienation. The tribals were never legally recognized as owners of the lands which they cultivated.

The second form of land alienation is reported to have taken place due to 'benami' transfers. The report of the study team of the Union Home Ministry (May 1975) pointed out that large scale transfers of ownership of the Adivasis' lands are being allowed to go out of hands through illegal and benami transactions, collusive civil proceedings etc., in which land remains to be in the names of the original owners who are reduced to the level of share croppers.

Another form of land alienation is related to the leasing or mortgaging of the land. To raise loans for various needs the tribals have to give their land as mortgage to the local moneylenders or to the rich farmers.

Encroachment is another form of dispossessing the tribals of their lands and this is done by the new entrants in all the places where there were no proper land records. Bribing the local Patwari for manipulating the date of settlement of land disputes, ante-dating etc., are resorted to claim the tribal lands.

Concubinage or marital alliance is another form to circumvent the law and grab tribal lands at no cost at all.

Fictitious adoption of the non-tribals by the tribal families is also another method to snatch the lands of the tribals.

Also the slackness in the implementation of the restrictive provisions encourages the non-tribals to occupy the tribal lands.

Thus, lands alienation which takes place in various ways has assumed alarming proportion threatening the right to life of the tribal population. Though the problem lies elsewhere, it is being unfortunately always interpreted as the handiwork of certain individuals like the moneylender, traders, land lords, etc, without understanding the class connection of these individuals. The unsystematic land record of the pre-colonial and colonial periods was followed by the present State. There was collection of 'taxes - (a strange phenomenon for the natives and it was the beginning process of alienation) in the tribal areas.

In the name of protecting the interest of the tribals stringent laws were enacted by the government but the non-tribals found the loopholes to their advantage. This double edged nature of State policy in one of the facets of the existing contradictions in the Indian Tribal Society. The process of land alienation is not an accidental one, but it has arisen because of the concerted efforts of the antagonistic class interest that are operating in the tribal areas. This is not just migration of the non-tribals into tribal areas rather there is a history behind this migration and the State has supported the migrant non-tribals to settle down in the tribal lands.

However, being the natural owners of forests and its adjoining lands the tribals are being deprived of their rights to own them. They have been downgraded from their earlier 'self-reliant' status to a 'dependent' one. Coupled with the exploitation by the non-tribals, the State legislations also proved detrimental to their interests.

1.21 Displacement

"Displacement" is the project impact that necessitates resettlement of affected persons. Displacement may be either physical or economic. Physical displacement is the actual physical relocation of people resulting into loss of shelter, productive assets or access to productive assets (such as land, water and forests). Economic displacement results from an action that interrupts or eliminates access to productive assets without physically relocating the people themselves.

In the narrow sense, displacement implies relocation of affected persons to a place away from their places of residence, but displacement need not necessarily involve relocation. When the impact results in significant loss of income sources or means of livelihoods, whether or not the affected persons must move to another place, is also displacement. In most cases, displacement is triggered by land acquisition through the exercise of eminent domain or other powers of the state. Cernea (2005) shows how the world's major development agencies have moved towards policy consensus that "restricted access" is a form of displacement. Losses most often arises because of land alienation, through expropriation and the use of eminent domain or other regulatory measures.

It is estimated that some 50 million persons have been displaced since 1950 on account of various development projects, of which more than 40 per cent are tribals. These projects include large irrigation dams, hydroelectric projects, open cast and underground coal mines, super thermal power plants and mineral-based industrial units. In the name of development, tribals are displaced from their traditional habitats and livelihoods with little or no rehabilitation, and are rendered destitute, bewildered and pauperised by the development pro-

ness. They are pushed into a vortex of increasing assetlessness, unemployment, debt bondage and hunger due to loss of access to traditional sources of livelihood viz., land, forests, rivers, pastures, cattle etc.

In these large development projects, tribals lose their land not only to the project authorities but even to non-tribal outsiders who converge into these areas and corner both the land and the new economic opportunities in commerce and petty industry. Even wage employment to local tribals is rare. In Chotanagpur area, though the tribals constitute more than 50 per cent of the total population, there are not more than 5 per cent of them in the industrial working force. In some of the large firms like TISCO, Jamshedpur and Bharat Coking Coal Ltd., Dhanbad, the tribals employed are less than 5 per cent. Development for the nation has meant displacement, pauperisation, or, at its very best, peonage for the tribals.

In the scenario of development and displacement the majority of the affected are obviously the tribals and other economically marginal rural populations who have historically dependent on the natural resource base for their subsistence. A significant point to be noted here is that the tribal communities are roughly 8% of the total population of the country, yet over 50% of those displaced belong to this section of our population. The implication is obvious- the tribal people are disproportionately affected by our developmental policies and the resultant displacement.

In most of the cases people's consciousness and awareness of tribal displacement and impoverishment awakes largely when they come across news about the struggles and movements of the affected people. Among major struggles at present in the Chotanagpur tribal belt are those against the Netarhat Pilot Project Test Firing Range (the case now suspended because of the fierce opposition from the affected people) in Gumla and Palamau districts which threatens to displace about three lakh people, the Koel Karo dams in Ranchi and Gumla districts threatening to displace about one lakh people, coal mines in the North Karanpura Valley of Palamau district that may cause displacement of about a lakh of people, and the Subarnrekha dams in Singhbhum district threatening to displace another one lakh tribals. Prevailing conditions in other states point toward the similar trend. Agitation against the Narmada Dam is now known internationally. The Palavaram dam in Andhra Pradesh shall be displacing an estimate three lakh people, majority of them being tribals.

Similar concern has been raised over the past half-decade with regard to Arunachal's hydropower development. The past few months have seen a spurt in opposition in the forms of agitations, bandh calls, withdrawal of meetings, etc against 3000- MW Dibang Multipurpose Project, proposed in Lower Dibang Valley district. Various NGOs, Society like Idu Cultural and Literary Society (ICLS), Student Union are in constant conflicts with the Central and State Government and projects constructing agencies like the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) and the Northeastern Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO) on various issues concerning socio-cultural, economic and political security of the local tribal inhabitant.

1.22 Rehabilitation

"Rehabilitation" is such an elastic term which depending upon its context... has come to mean everything from restoring to former capacity or condition, to making in an improved form. The term rehabilitation is also used in both a limited and comprehensive sense. It may refer to services specially concerned with education, physical functioning, psychological adjustment, social adaptation, vocational capabilities or recreational activities. Rehabilitation, in its practical conception, is not only the services and the techniques of functional restoration, but also organization of all the efforts of the people involved, as well as the end result or goal of those efforts. It is individual as well as community adjustment, and integration, which involves the acceptance of programmes designed to accomplish maximum restoration (Alexander, 1991). It is the positive quality of the rehabilitation activities to convince the individuals or community concerned that their acceptance and co-operation are vital to complete fulfillment of the objective, their self sufficiency.

Thus, the core of the rehabilitation is the people. It is not simply a programme or facilities provided but the restriction to a fuller existence. Writing about the concept of rehabilitation, W. Scott Allan has rightly remarked in his book, "Rehabilitation: A community Challenge", that rehabilitation is a big moral with a bigger purpose. The term had its origin in the civil and common law of a feudal society in the Middle Ages. The word "rehabilitation" came in India in the wake of World War II. The army had to think in terms of rehabilitation and organized rehabilitation departments for the mass crippling of war. But the present concept, classified above, got its footing when there was the division of Indian Union in 1947 into two countries-India and Pakistan and thousands of refugees were to be settled. Thus, when the problem to settle a particular section of population permanently at a new place came before the government, she materialized concept of Rehabilitation. Therefore, rehabilitation may be defined as "transfer of population from one area to another on a planned basis".

1.23 Impact of Displacement and Rehabilitation

When we look into various aspects of displacement, the displaced persons or the 'oustees' may be categorized on the basis of the degree of impact of displacement. L.K. Mahapatra (1994) divides them into the following categories:

- a) People who lose their house, homestead land, and their farming land and other productive assets in full.
- b) People who lose their house and homestead and their farm land or other productive assets in part.
- c) People who lose their house and homestead only.
- d) People who lose farm land only in full or in significant part.
- e) People who lose their base for plying their arts and crafts or selling/ bartering their specialized services or skills.
- f) People who lose their base for earning their livelihood from the local forest or other ecosystem including fishing in the river.
- g) People who lose their base for earning their livelihood through wage labour.
- h) People who lose their house or land or both for making room for constructing the township to house the project employees or for construction of the canals or ancillary structure for completion or maintenance of the project.

"But, unfortunately, in India as also in many developing countries, the 'oustees' are normally considered to properly cover a few categories-(a), (b) and (c)- but all the other categories-(d) to (h) - are not included under 'oustees' legally in order to stake their claims for compensation or rehabilitation".

In most cases, the only legislation that is applied is the Land Acquisition Act, 1894 (amended in 1984) which only makes the state liable for cash compensation, in the process legitimizing the gross injustice and social violence in reducing rights and interest into claims and complex system into monetary compensation. Significantly the act only recognizes individual and not collective or community rights. Much of the land attempted to be taken away from the tribals is Common Property Resources (CPRs). If it is a forest land, the law gives no right whatsoever to the people though they might have used it as their livelihood for several generations. Traditionally, no compensation has been paid for it. Besides, most tribals live in regions that have been administratively neglected and are considered backward. They cannot, therefore, hope to get a remunerative price for it and the compensation offered to them for the little individual land they own is very low. Besides, the tribals have traditionally lived within a self sufficient, subsistence economy that depended on the natural resources. They had relatively little

exposure to the economy outside their region. Except North-East and parts of Chota Nagpur, literacy among them is extremely low. As a result they cannot hope to get many jobs in the new projects.

Studies by several Anthropologists have shown multiple effects of displacement. Involuntary resettlement leads to increase stress both psychological and socio-cultural and also heighten morbidity and mortality. Another outcome is a feeling of alienation, helplessness and powerlessness. Moving outside is just unthinkable to the tribal people as they are deeply attached to their ancestral land. The word 'resettlement' does not exist in many tribal languages (H.M Mathur). The widespread consequences of displacement include dismantling of production systems, desecration of ancestral sacred zones or graves and temples, scattering of kinship groups and family systems, disorganization of informal social network that provide mutual support, weakening of self management and social control, disruption of trade and market links, etc. Further, these patterns have been equated with national progress where public purpose and national interest have been used interchangeably. It is this mindset that justifies the labelling of those who criticise these projects as not only anti-project and anti-development but also anti-national.

The more unfortunate part of the story is the case of multiple displacements. It has also happened that several tribal groups after having made the painful transition and settling into a new life style were again uprooted and displaced. The case of Singrauli in Uttar Pradesh and New Mangalore Port are the examples. If displacement is inevitable, resettlement must include reconstruction of production system, raising standards of living and minimizing the conflicts with the host community. The commitment therefore has to be not just for resettlement but for rehabilitation which should be an entitlement and not an act of reluctant generosity (Smitu Kothari, 1995). Moreover, the cost of project should always include the cost to be incurred on resettlement and rehabilitation. All these projects should be open for public debate and discussion if implementation of any project which does not include satisfactory arrangement for resettlement and rehabilitation (Hasnain 2001 pp 222-224).

1.24 Globalization and Tribal World

Globalization in its literal sense is the process of transformation of local or regional phenomena into global ones. It can be described as a process by which the people of the world are unified into a single society and function together. This process is a combination of economic, technological, socio-cultural and political forces. Globalization is often used to refer to economic globalization, that is, integration of national economies into the international economy through trade, foreign direct investment, capital flows, migration, and the spread of technology.

Intuitively, globalization is a process fueled by, and resulting in, increasing cross-border flows of goods, services, money, people, information, and culture (Held 1999). Sociologist Anthony Giddens (1990) proposes to regard globalization as a decoupling between space and time, while geographer David Harvey (1989) and political scientist James Mittelman (1996) observe that globalization entails a "compression" of space and time, a shrinking of the world. Sociologist Manuel Castells (1996) emphasizes the informational aspects of the global economy when he defines it as "an economy with the capacity to work as a unit in real time on a planetary scale." In a similar vein, sociologist Gary Gereffi (1994) writes about global "commodity chains," whereby production is coordinated on a global scale. Political scientist Robert Gilpin (1987) defines globalization as the "increasing interdependence of national economies in trade, finance, and macroeconomic policy." Sociologist Roland Robertson (1992) argues that globalization "refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole." Also sociologist Martin Albrow (1997) defines globalization as the "diffusion of practices, values and technology that have an influence on people's lives worldwide."

Indigenous peoples are on the cusp of the crisis in sustainable development. Their communities are concrete examples of sustainable societies, historically evolved in diverse ecosystems. Today, they face the chal-

enges of extinction or survival and renewal in a globalized world. The impact of globalization is strongest on these populations perhaps more than any other because these communities have no voice and are therefore easily swept aside by the invisible hand of the market and its proponents. Globalization is not merely a question of marginalization for indigenous peoples it is a multi-pronged attack on the very foundation of their existence and livelihoods.

1.25 Tribe and Impact of Globalization

The tribal population of India (67.6 million) around 8 percent of the total population is larger than that of any other country in the world. The tribal population of India is more than the total population of France and Britain and four times that of Australia. If all the tribals of India had lived in one state, it would have been the fifth most populous state after Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Maharashtra. Madhya Pradesh is not only the largest state in India but also has the largest tribal population of the country.

The forest occupies a central position in tribal culture and economy. The tribal way of life is very much dictated by the forest right from birth to death. It is ironical that the poorest people of India are living in the areas of richest natural resources. Historically, tribals have been pushed to corners owing to economic interests of various dominant groups. In contemporary India, the need for land for development is still forcing them, albeit this time to integrate with mainstream.

In spite of the protection given to the tribal population by the Constitution of India (1950), tribals still remain the most backward ethnic group in India. They rate very low on the three most important indicators of development: health, education and income. The tribals are most backward not only compared with the general population, but also compared to the Scheduled Caste (Dalits), the other backward social group with constitutional protection. While examining the effects of planned developmental intervention on the tribals from 1961 to 1981, it was observed that twenty years of intervention has not made any significant impact in improving the conditions of the tribals.

Tribal development policies and programmes in India assumed that all the tribals will develop and will integrate themselves with the so-called mainstream. This has happened only in a symbolic way. As a result of the planned tribal development, stratification on secular lines has taken place among tribals and only a small section has been able to take advantage of the development programmes. The reasons being that the development programmes were not implemented due to inefficient and corrupt bureaucracy.

It is estimated that owing to construction of over 1500 major irrigation development projects since independence, over 16 million people were displaced from their villages, of which about 40 per cent belong to tribal population. The government and the planners are aware of the eroding resource base and socio-cultural heritage of tribal population through a combination of development interventions, commercial interest and lack of effective legal protection to tribal and the disruption of life and environment of tribal population owing to unimaginative, insensitive package of relief (Planning Commission, 1990). Still the development process continued unmindful of displacement.

A common feature shared by most of the tribal people is their remoteness and marginal quality of territorial resources. In the past, exploitation of such poor regions was found both difficult and uneconomic. But, the recent rapid technological advancement and unrivalled economic and political strength of world capitalism and the rising power of neo-colonialism through the G-8 directly and the IMF, WB, IBRD, etc., as agencies, have created favourable conditions for the evasion and extraction of natural resources from the ecologically fragile territories of tribal people. Thus, forced evictions of tribals to make way for mammoth capital-intensive development projects have become a distressing routine and ever-increasing phenomenon.

There is a heavy concentration of industrial and mining activities in the central belt. All the massive steel plants, BALCO, NALCO, heavy engineering concerns etc. are based here. Most river basin development schemes and hydropower projects, a chain of forest-based and ancillary industries and an increasing number of highly polluting industries are located in this region. Despite intense industrial activity in the central Indian tribal belt, the stipulation for private or joint sector enterprises is negligible. Apart from the provisions of Apprenticeship Act, there is no stipulation for private or joint sector enterprises to recruit certain percentage of dispossessed tribal workforce. The tribals are forced to live in juxtaposition with alien capitalist relations and cultures with traumatic results. They are forced onto the ever-expanding low paid, insecure, transient and destitute labour market. About 40 per cent of the tribals of central India supplement their income by participating in this distorted and over exploitative capitalist sector. Many more are slowly crushed into oblivion in their homeland or in urban slums. This is nothing short of ethnocide. Their economic and cultural survival is at stake.

India happens to be the second most dammed country in the world. It has invested over Rs. 300 billion on dams and hydropower projects by 2000. The World Bank has directly funded as many as 87 large-scale dam projects in India as against only 58 for the whole of the African continent and 59 for Latin America. Between 1981 and 1990, the World Bank provided \$7 billion for such projects in India, i.e., one-fifth of its total funding for 85 countries world over. Almost all major dam projects in India are intrinsically linked to world capitalism. Nearly 60 per cent of these large dams are located in central and western India where about 80 per cent of the tribals live. India's Northeast has been identified as the country's future 'powerhouse', and Arunachal Pradesh is slated to be the major contributor. In 2001, the country's Central Electricity Authority did a preliminary ranking of the hydroelectric potential of various Indian rivers. It identified 168 large projects in the Brahmaputra Basin alone, which collectively could generate more than 63,300 megawatts of hydropower. Out of these projects, as many as 87 were in Arunachal Pradesh.

There is no reliable and complete information on the number of tribals displaced in the country since independence. The estimates range between 5 and 7 million - mostly by the dams, followed by mines and industries - or approximately one in every ten tribals has been displaced by different developments projects. It is not only the magnitude of involuntary tribal displacement that should attract the special concern but also the sacrifice of collective identity, historical and cultural heritage, and of course the survival support. Poverty, malnutrition, mortality, morbidity, illiteracy, unemployment, debt bondage, and serfdom among the tribals are markedly higher.

A number of studies suggest that during the 90s, when policies of Liberalisation-Globalization-Privatisation (LGP) were implemented in various degrees, income distribution has worsened and as a result is having a dampening impact on long-term economic growth and on the prospects for poverty reduction, necessary to meet the UN Millennium Declaration Goal of halving the number of people living in extreme income poverty. Extreme income poverty has affected some 150 million people in India. Tribals make up about one third of the income poor. An assessment of progress has been less than anticipated. The trade aspects of globalization also alter the context of many issues and areas affecting tribals, in some cases intensifying problems and in other cases affecting the policy actions required to address the problems.

Globalization affects tribals differently. Urban and educated tribals may benefit from the increased opportunities for work that come with the influx of foreign companies and investments. These employment avenues are complemented by greater opportunities to receive education and skills training of a higher quality. The new technologies that define this era, in particular the computer and Internet, may be accessible to this group of tribals. Conversely, poor, uneducated, credit-constrained, informal and agricultural sector tribals will benefit in a much less direct manner. The gains of globalization have so far benefitted to those who already have education and skill advantage, easier market access and possession of assets for use as collateral to access credit. But for the larger tribals population, globalization is associated with rising prices, loss of job security, lack of health care and tribal

development programmes. Globalization may also weaken the Constitutional protections, in terms of education and job reservations given to tribals.

Markets are not very friendly to the poor tribals, to the weak or to the vulnerable, either nationally or internationally. They are often the handmaidens of powerful interest groups and they are greatly influenced by the prevailing distribution of income. In a capitalist economy, all are not in a position to compete in the market. Some like Tribals and Dalits who do not have enough education, health and nutrition to compete will fall outside the market place. That is why much better distribution of income and assets, of credit, of power structures and certainly of knowledge and skills are vital to making markets work more efficiently. Markets cannot become more neutral or competitive unless the playing field is even and playable.

If globalization were superimposed on a poorly educated and poorly-trained tribal people, particularly in states like Bihar and Jharkhand with poor systems of governance and infrastructure, it would not lead to growth nor reduce poverty. Globalization may no longer be an option, but a fact. However, it must be implemented with a human face.

The efforts to become competitive often hurt the social sectors first. It is most often these sectors that face budgetary reductions when liberalisation policies are implemented. Conservative monetary and fiscal policies are often undertaken and these too, independent of reductions in the size and scope of social sectors, can indirectly reduce allocations to social services and basic provisions. Such cuts in social spending are likely to hit the tribals the hardest who already have limited access to education and health facilities.

The tribals are part of the Indian society, at the same time they are different. Special policy and programmes are required to address and redress these differences especially in the context of globalization. When we plan for tribal development, we have to regard these differences, take a special note of their situations and capabilities and provide them facilities to develop on the line they want to take. Outsiders cannot develop tribals; they can become only facilitators if they want to do so. If they have to unfold from within, they must have participation in any development decision. Their felt needs should be transformed in development programmes. The tribals can participate in their development programmes only if they are considered to be equals and if unique identities are respected.

Check your Progress

1. What do you mean by Land Alienation? Discuss its forms and causes.
2. What do you understand by Displacement and Rehabilitation?
3. Discuss the impact of Displacement and Rehabilitation on tribal communities.
4. What do you mean by Globalization? Give an overview of impact of Globalization on tribal communities.

1.26 Suggested Reading

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UNIT II

Issue of Identity: Social Movements and its Types

2.0 Objective

The objective of the unit is to make aware students the meaning of Movement and to distinguish a movement from a non movement and to identify the basic features which are characteristics of a movement. The unit aimed to provide the very generality of the concept, theories and its multi dimensional nature and its types on the basis of numerous criteria. Finally it focuses on the issue of tribal movement in India.

2.1 Social Movements

The usage of the term "social movement" has been traced back to a work on French Revolution entitled "The History of the Social Movement in France from 1789-1850" by a Danish historian Lorenz von Stein in 1852. In his work he conceptualized a social movement in the form of a collective action by the people (masses) in order to bring about changes in the conditions of society. Since the time of von Stein social psychologists, sociologists and social anthropologists have joined the historians in the study of social movements. The study of social movements is primary a study of the social or cultural change of a social order as well as of the values and norms. Social movements are a type of group action. They are large informal groupings of individuals and/or organizations focused on specific political or social issues. In other words, on carrying out, resisting or undoing a social change. It refers to collective activities designed to bring about or resist primary changes in an existing society or group. Wherever they occur, social movements can dramatically shape the direction of society. When individuals and groups of people—civil rights activists and other visionaries, for instance—transcend traditional bounds, they may bring about major shifts in social policy and structures.

2.1.1 Definition

Rudolf Heberle defines a social movement as a collective effort to transform established relations within a particular society. Neil Smelser views social movement as directly oriented towards a change in social institutions and social norms. Herbert Blumer refers to social movements as collective enterprises to establish a social order of life. Charles Tilly defines social movements as a series of contentious performances, displays and campaigns by which ordinary people made collective claims on others. For him social movements are a major vehicle for ordinary people's participation in public politics. Sidney Tarrow defines a social movement as collective challenges [to elites, authorities, other groups or cultural codes] by people with common purposes and solidarity in sustained interactions with elites, opponents and authorities. He specifically distinguishes social movements from political parties and interest groups. A formulation by M.S.A Rao suggests that a social movement essentially involves sustained collective mobilization through either informal or formal organization and is generally oriented towards bringing about change in the existing system of relationships. Rao considers ideology as an important component of a social movement. Mahapatra (1990) after careful examination of various definition of social movements consider that "A social movement occurs when a fairly large number of people, or an otherwise identifiable segment of the population, deliberately band together for collective action in order to alter, reconstitute, reinterpret, restore, protect, supplant or create some portion of the culture or social order, or to better their life-chances by redistributing the power of control in a society. These movements occasionally repeated collective action over a length of time".

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2.2 Characteristics of Social Movement

It is necessary to distinguish a movement from a non movement and to identify the basic features which are characteristics of a movement. Social scientists generally consider two basic characteristics of social movement.

1. **Collective Action:** Social movement undoubtedly involves collective action. However, this collective action, takes the form of a movement only when it is sustained for a long time as distinct from a sporadic occurrence. This collective action need not be formally organized. It could be an informal attempt also. But it should be able to create an interest and awakening in relatively large number of people. Hence, a social movement essentially involves sustained collective mobilization through either informal or formal organization.
2. **Oriented towards social change:** A social movement is generally oriented towards bringing about social change. This change could either be partial or total. Though the movement is aimed at bringing about a change in the value, norms, ideologies of the existing system, efforts are also made by some other forces to resist the changes and to maintain the status quo. The counter attempts are normally defensive and restorative rather than innovative and initiating change. They are normally the organized efforts of an already established order to maintain itself.

As M.S.A Rao (1982) points out that there is considerable agreement among students of social movement regarding the above two basic features, there are differences of opinion as regards including other criteria, such as presence of an ideology, method of organization and the nature of consequences as part of the organized efforts of an already established, routinized order to maintain itself.

1. **Ideology behind the Movement:** An important component of social movement that distinguishes it from the general category of collective mobilization is the presence of an ideology. Example. A student strike involves collective mobilization is oriented towards change. But in the absence of ideology a student strike becomes an isolated event and not a movement. On the contrary, if the strike is committed to an ideology, it may last for longer period and assumed the form of a movement.
2. **Organizational Framework:** As Paul Wilkinson (1971) has pointed out that a social movement requires a minimum of organizational framework to achieve success or at least to maintain the tempo of the movement. To make the distinction clear between the leaders and followers, to make clear the purpose of the movement, to persuade people to take part in it or to support it, to adopt different techniques to achieve the goals—a social movement must have some amount of organizational framework.
3. **The Techniques and Results:** A social movement may adopt its own technique or method to achieve its goal. There is no certainty regarding it. It may follow peaceful or conflicting, violent or non violent, compulsive or persuasive, democratic or undemocratic means or methods to reach its goal. The same thing is true of the results. It may become successful or it may fail; it may become partial success or at least it may create a general 'awakening' in the public regarding an issue. The result of a movement has a close bearing on the ideology and the organizational framework.

2.3 Types of Social Movement

The question of 'meaning of movement' is to classify social movement. Given the very generality of the concept and its multi dimensional nature, social movements have been categorized on the basis of numerous criteria. Based on the character and implications of the commitment to change, organisational mode and strategy and the 'constituency' of the population which accords the movement normative commitment and participation, Paul Wilkinson (1971) adopts the following main types:

1. Religious movement, millenarism and sect
2. Movements of rural and urban discontent
3. Nativistic, nationalist and race movements

4. Imperialism and pan- movements
5. Class and occupational interest movements
6. Moral protest and reformist movements
7. Revolutionary, resistance and counter-revolutionary movements
8. Intellectual movement
9. Youth movement
10. Women's movement

M.S.A Rao (1982) classifies movements into three broader types i.e reform, transformation and revolutions. Reform movement may be identified with partial changes in the value system and consequential changes in the quality of relationships. In contrast, transformative aims at bringing about middle level structural changes in the traditional distribution of power. Finally revolution is identified with radical changes in the totality of social and cultural systems. The need to classify movements by changes they intend to bring about has been advocated by Mukerji (1979). Based on this criterion he suggested three divisions- social movement, revolutionary movement and quasi movements. 'Any collective mobilization for action directed explicitly towards an alteration or transformation of the structure of a system can be properly understood as a social movement. When the collective mobilization aims at effecting wide ranging and far reaching changes in the major institutional systems comprising the whole society, we can rightly term it a revolutionary movement. Collective mobilizations aimed at changes within a system are quasi-movements.'

Let us now discuss some basic types of social movement that are propounded by various scholars.

2.3.1 Reform Movements

Movements dedicated to changing some norms, usually legal ones. Examples of such a movement would include a trade union with a goal of increasing workers rights, a green movement advocating a set of ecological laws, or a movement supporting introduction of a capital punishment or right to abortion. Some reform movements may advocate a change in custom and moral norms, for example, condemnation of pornography or proliferation of some religion. The nature of such movements is not just related to the issue but also to the methods used. There could be reformist or radical methods used to achieve the same end, such as in the case of making abortion legal and readily available.

In other words, reform movements are organized to carry out reforms in some specific areas. The reformers endeavor to change elements of the system for better. For example: Civil Rights Movement, Women's Liberation Movement, Arya Samaj Movement, Brahma Samaj Movement etc.

2.3.2 Revolutionary Movements

The revolutionary movements deny that the system will even work. These movements are deeply dissatisfied with the social order and work for radical change. They advocate replacing the entire existing structure. Their objective is the reorganization of society in accordance with their own ideological blueprint. Revolutionary movements generally become violent as they progress. Example: The Protestant Reformation Movement, the Socialist Movement, the Communist Revolution of China.

2.3.3 Reactionary or Revivalist Movement

Reactionary movements are those advancing aims which were once held by the general society but which have subsequently been laid aside seeking to bring back the good old days Cameron (1966). These aim to reverse the social change. They highlight the importance and greatness of traditional values, ideologies and institutional arrangements. They strongly criticize the fast moving changes of the present.

2.3.4 Resistance Movement

These movements are formed to resist a change that is already taking place in society. These can be directed against social and cultural changes which are already happening in the country.

2.3.5 Utopian Movement

These are attempts to take the society or a section of it towards a state of perfection. These are loosely structured collectivities that envision a radically changed and blissful state, either on a large scale at some time in the future or on a smaller scale in the present. The Utopian ideal and the means of it are often vague, but many utopian movements have quite specific programmes for social change. The Hare Krishna Movement of the seventies, the movement towards the establishment of Ram Rajya and the Sangh Parivar, the Communists and Socialists pronouncement of a movement towards the classless, casteless society free from all kinds of exploitation etc.

2.3.6 Peasant Movement

Peasant movement is understood as an attempt of a group to effect change in the face of resistance and the peasant are people who are engaged in an agricultural or related production with primitive means who surrender part of their or its equivalent to landlords or to agents of change. The history of peasant movements in India can be traced to colonial period when repressive economic policies, the new land revenue system, the colonial administrative and judicial system and the ruin of handicrafts leading to the overcrowding of land transformed the agrarian structure and impoverished the peasantry. In the Zamindari system peasants were left to the mercies of the Zamindars who exploited them in form of illegal dues. The British government levied heavy land revenue in the Ryotwari areas. Peasants were forced to borrow money from the moneylenders and they were reduced to the status of tenants at will, share croppers and landless laborers while their lands, crops and cattle passed into the hands to landlords, trader moneylenders and such peasants. When the peasants could take it no longer they resisted against the oppression and exploitation through uprisings. Peasant Movements occupy an important place in the history of social unrest in India though the aims and objectives of these movements differ in nature and degree from region to region. It is in this sense that these movements also aimed at the unification of the peasants of a region, development of leadership, ideology and a peasant elite. Through these movements emerged a new power structure and peasant alliance. The genesis of peasant movements rest in the relationship patterns of different social categories existing within the framework of feudal and semi feudal structure of our society. In the post Independence period the nature and objectives of the peasant movement have changed to getting remunerative prices for agricultural produce, to increase agricultural production, to establish parity between prices of agricultural produce and industrial goods and to get minimum wages for the agricultural laborers.

Some of the important peasants uprising in India are like Sanyasi rebellion of 1770, Wahabi uprising of 1831, Santhal uprising of 1855, - Indigo revolt of 1859, Punjab Kisan struggle of 1890-1900, Champaran satyagraha of 1917-18, Moplah rebellion of 1921, Bardoli satyagarya of 1928, Telangana movement of 1946, Naxalbari movement of 1957, etc.

2.3.7 Women's Movement

The women's movement in India is a rich and vibrant movement which has taken different forms in different parts of the country. When India became independent, it was widely acknowledged that the battle for freedom had been fought as much by women as by men. One of the methods M K Gandhi chose to undermine the authority of the British was for Indians to defy the law which made it illegal for them to make salt. At the time,

salt-making was a monopoly and earned considerable revenues for the British. Gandhi began his campaign by going on a march - the salt march - through many villages, leading finally to the sea, where he and others broke the law by making salt. No woman had been included by Gandhi in his chosen number of marchers. But nationalist women protested and they forced him to allow them to participate. The first to join was Sarojini Naidu, who went on to become the first woman President of the Indian National Congress in 1925. Her presence was a signal for hundreds of other women to join and eventually the salt protest was made successful by the many women who not only made salt but also sat openly in marketplaces selling, and indeed, buying it. The trajectory of this movement is usually traced from the social reform movements of the 19th century when campaigns for the betterment of the conditions of women's lives were taken up, initially by men. By the end of the century women had begun to organize themselves and gradually they took up a number of causes such as education, the conditions of women's work and so on. It was in the early part of the 20th century that women's organizations were set up, and many of the women who were active in these later became involved in the freedom movement. Independence brought many promises and dreams for women in India - the dream of an egalitarian, just, democratic society in which both men and women would have a voice. The reality was, however, somewhat different. For all that had happened was that, despite some improvements in the status of women, patriarchy had simply taken on new and different forms. By the 1960s it was clear that many of the promises of Independence were still unfulfilled. It was thus that the 1960s and 1970s saw a spate of movements in which women took part: campaigns against rising prices, movements for land rights, peasant movements. Women from different parts of the country, came together to form groups within and outside the political parties. Everywhere, in the different movements that were sweeping the country, women participated in large numbers. Everywhere, their participation resulted in transforming the movements from within. One of the first issues to receive countrywide attention from women's groups was violence against women, specifically in the form of rape, and 'dowry deaths'. This was also the beginning of a process of learning for women: most protests were directed at the State. Because women were able to mobilize support, the State responded, seemingly positively, by changing the law on rape and dowry, making both more stringent. In the early campaigns, groups learnt from day to day that targeting the State was not enough and that victims also needed support. So a further level of work was needed: awareness raising so that violence against women could be prevented, rather than only dealt with after it had happened. Legal aid and counseling centers were set up, and attempts were made to establish women's shelters. Knowledge was also recognized as an important need. The women's activity was geared towards improving the conditions of women's lives. In recent years, the euphoria of the 1970s and early 1980s, symbolized by street-level protests, campaigns in which groups mobilized at a national level, has been replaced by a more considered and complex response to issues. In many parts of India, women are no longer to be seen out on the streets protesting about this or that form of injustice. This apparent lack of a visible movement has led to the accusation that the women's movement is dead or dying. While the participation of urban, middle class women is undeniable, it is not they who make up the backbone of the movement, or of the many, different campaigns that are generally seen as comprising the movement. The anti-alcohol agitation in Andhra Pradesh and similar campaigns in other parts of India were started and sustained by poor, low-caste, often working-class women. One of the biggest challenges women have had to face in recent years is the growing influence of the religious right in India. Right-wing groups have built much of their support on the involvement of women: offering to help them with domestic problems, enabling them to enter the public space in a limited way, and all the while ensuring that the overall ideology within which they operate remains firmly patriarchal. For activists too, this has posed major problems. It has forced them to confront the fact that they cannot assume solidarity as women that cuts across class, religion, caste, ethnic difference. It is important to recognize that for a country of India's magnitude, change in male-female relations and the kinds of issues the women's movement is focusing on will not come easy. For every step the movement takes forward, there will be a possible backlash, a possible regression. And it is this that makes for the contradictions, this that makes it possible for there to be women who can aspire to, and attain, the highest political office in the country, and for women to continue to have to confront patriarchy within the home, in the workplace, throughout their lives.

2.3.8 Backward Caste Movement

The Backward castes have been deprived of many social, economic, political and religious privileges. These people provided manual labor and the untouchables occupied the lowest position among the caste hierarchy. They were subjected to extreme form of exploitation. The colonial power accentuated the disparities in the distribution of economic power. The atrocities united the lower castes against the upper castes. Some of the important backward caste movement which came up was Satyashodak Samaj and Nadar Movement which consolidated the masses along the castelines. E.V Ramaswamy started Self-Respect movement against the Brahmins in South India. In 1950s there was a widespread desire among the non-Brahmin castes to be categorized as Backward. Subsequently Backward Class commission was set up to look into the conditions and requirements of these classes. Mandal Commission submitted its report in 1980 recommending reservations for backward castes in educational institutions and government offices. However this move resulted in anti-Mandal Commission movement which resulted in large scale violence and many students lost their lives.

2.3.9 Dalit Movement

Dalits are the suppressed people at the lost rung of the cast-based hierarchy. Their inferior occupations and low levels of ascriptive status make them vulnerable for attacks at the hands of upper-caste people. The organizational efforts made by Dalit leadership for uplifting their status are known as Dalit movement. The protest against untouchability, casteism and discrimination faced by the dalits. Dalit movement indicates some trends of protest ideologies which entail the following - withdrawal and self organization, high varna status and and Islam. Mahatma Gandhi in 1923 founded the All India Harijan Sevak Sangh to start education and schools for the dalits. Another most important dalit leader Dr. Ambedkar struggled to secure the basic human dignity to the dalits. The Mahad Satyagrah for the right of water led by him was one of the outstanding movements of the dalits. The role of All India Depressed Classes Association and All India Depressed Classes Federation were the principal organizations which initiated a movement to improve the conditions of the dalits. These organizations aimed at improving their miserable conditions and to spread education among them. They worked to secure rights of admission to school, drawing water from the public wells, entering the temples and to use the roads.

2.3.10 Tribal Movement

Tribal movements in India are as old as other types of movements. They were considered to be rebellious and 'civilized' rulers quelled them as they had superior arms. The tribal were in a position of confrontation both with the Hindu overloads and the British colonists as the latter seriously encroached on their rights and territories.

Roy Burman identifies eight kinds of responses of the tribals to the different challenges that they faced; response to threat to the privacy of habitat; response to threat to access to and control of resources; response to description of traditional roles in the total interaction set up; search for new meanings of the relationships between man and nature; search for new meaning of the relationships between individual and society; search for new frontiers of identity; search for a more satisfactory system of control of resources; and search for a more satisfactory system of organization of community power at all levels. These responses, however, are neither mutually exclusive nor have all of them resulted in movements. He shows that during British rule, alienation from land, due to faulty legislation pertaining to forest lands and lack of understanding of tribal social organization were responsible for tribal uprisings. Although they have diverse ideological overtones, the main theme was the millenarian- waiting for the day of deliverances from an acute situation of relative deprivation.

Tribal since independences have been characterized by two features. There is a strong tendency towards establishing tribal ethnic identities. They find new meanings regarding the relationships between man and nature and individual and society by reinterpreting their own traditions and myths. The second major trend is in the direction of agrarian movements in the context of political ideologies, including the Naxalite one.

While Roy Burman considers the general characteristics of tribal movements in India, Joseph Troisi examines three specific movements among the Santals, namely the Santal Rebellion of 1855-57, the Kharwar movement and the Jharkhand movement. All the three movement combined traditional cultural elements and value with new themes in the framework of the millenarian ideology of the restoration of the golden age. The Kharwar movement, which emerges in 1930s, however, was oriented towards reform in the direction of sanskritization. The Jharkhand movement took the Santals away from the process of Hinduization with increase ambivalence, involving in the modern political processes in the 1940s and 1950s. The movement cut across different tribes and demanded a separate state for the tribals (now state of Jharkhand) so as to be able to maintain their identity and autonomy.

Joseph Troisi emphasizes that these three movements should be looked at as three alternatives that the Santals adopted in overcoming their status of relative deprivation and for improving their social, economic, and political position. He shows how the penetration of Christianity in this area spread modern education and encouraged the emergence of a new leadership (Rao, 1982).

2.4 Theories of Social movement

Social scientists interest themselves in why social movements emerge. Do feelings of discontent, desires for a "change of pace," or even yearnings for "change for the sake of change" cause these shifts? Sociologists and other social scientists use three theories to explain why people mobilize for change or in other words, try to explain the structural conditions and motivational forces which give rise to a movement and these are Relative Deprivation Theory, the Strain Theory and Resource Mobilization Theory.

2.4.1 Relative Deprivation theory

The concept "Relative Deprivation" was developed by Stouffer in 1949. For Rao (1979: p 4) "A point that is conceded by relative deprivation theorists is that a position of relative deprivation alone will not generate a movement. The structural conditions of relative deprivation provide only the necessary conditions. Sufficient conditions are provided by the perception of a situation and by the estimate of capabilities by certain leaders that they can do something to remedy the situation". In other words, when members of a society become dissatisfied or frustrated with their social, economic, and political situation, they yearn for changes. Social scientists have long noted that the actual conditions that people live under may not be at fault, but people's perceptions of their conditions are. Relative deprivation refers to the negative perception that differences exist between wants and actualities. In other words, people may not actually be deprived when they believe they are. A relatively deprived group is disgruntled because they feel less entitled or privileged than a particular reference group. For example, a middle-class family may feel relatively deprived when they compare their house to that of their upper-class physician.

For social discontent to translate into social movement, members of the society must feel that they deserve, or have a right to, more wealth, power, or status than they have. The dissatisfied group must also conclude that it cannot attain its goals via conventional methods, whether or not this is the case. The group will organize into a social movement only if it feels that collective action will help its cause.

The relative-deprivation theory takes criticism from a couple of different angles. First, some sociologists note that feelings of deprivation do not necessarily prompt people into acting. Nor must people feel deprived before acting. Moreover, this theory does not address why perceptions of personal or group deprivation cause some people to reform society, and why other perceptions do not.

2.4.2 Structural strain theory

Structural strain theory was propounded by Smelser in 1962 and he proposes six factors that encourage social movement development:

1. Structural conduciveness - people come to believe their society has problems
2. Structural strain - people experience deprivation
3. Growth and spread of a solution - a solution to the problems people are experiencing is proposed and spreads
4. Precipitating factors - discontent usually requires a catalyst (often a specific event) to turn it into a social movement
5. Lack of social control - the entity that is to be changed must be at least somewhat open to the change, if the social movement is quickly and powerfully repressed, it may never materialize
6. Mobilization - this is the actual organizing and active component of the movement; people do what needs to be done

This strain theory treats structural strains as the underlying factor leading to collective behavior. Structural strain occurs at different levels of norms, values, mobilization and situational facilities. While strain provides the structural condition, the crystallization of a generalized belief marks the attempt of persons under strain to assess their situation and to explain the situation by creating or assembling a generalized belief. Both strain and generalized belief require precipitating factors to trigger off a movement (Rao, 1982).

This theory is also subject to circular reasoning as it incorporates, at least in part, deprivation theory and relies upon it, and social/structural strain for the underlying motivation of social movement activism. However, social movement activism is, like in the case of deprivation theory, often the only indication that there was strain or deprivation.

2.4.3 Resource mobilization theory

Resource mobilization theory emphasizes the importance of resources in social movement development and success. Resources are understood here to include: knowledge, money, media, labor, solidarity, legitimacy and internal and external support from power elite. The theory argues that social movements develop when individuals with grievances are able to mobilize sufficient resources to take action. The emphasis on resources offers an explanation why some discontented/deprived individuals are able to organize while others are not.

Some of the assumptions of the theory include:

- there will always be grounds for protest in modern, politically pluralistic societies because there is constant discontent (i.e., grievances or deprivation); this de-emphasizes the importance of these factors as it makes them ubiquitous
- actors are rational; they weigh the costs and benefits from movement participation
- members are recruited through networks; commitment is maintained by building a collective identity and continuing to nurture interpersonal relationships

- movement organization is contingent upon the aggregation of resources
- social movement organizations require resources and continuity of leadership
- social movement entrepreneurs and protest organizations are the catalysts which transform collective discontent into social movements; social movement organizations form the backbone of social movements
- the form of the resources shapes the activities of the movement (e.g., access to a TV station will result in the extensive use TV media)
- movements develop in contingent opportunity structures that influence their efforts to mobilize; as each movement's response to the opportunity structures depends on the movement's organization and resources, there is no clear pattern of movement development nor are specific movement techniques or methods universal

Critics of this theory argue that there is too much of an emphasize on resources, especially financial resources. Some movements are effective without an influx of money and are more dependent upon the movement members for time and labor (e.g., the civil rights movement in the U.S.).

2.4.4 Theory of Revitalisation Movement

For Rao (1982, p 4) theory of revitalization movement is one of the important theory which explains the genesis of social movement. The notion of revitalisation movements articulated by Wallace (1956) emphasize that social movements may be launched by the people with the sharp positive goals of creating a more satisfying culture for themselves. As such movements develop out of deliberate and conscious efforts of members of the collectivities. Naturally, a movement does not only assess and review the prevailing situation but also provides positive plan of action to improve and alter the situation of dispossession and degradation (Karna, 1998). It suggests that adaptive processes are employed to establish equilibrium situations. Although social movements develop a positive programme of action, they tend to be double-edged. On the one hand they express dissatisfaction, dissent and protest against existing conditions and on the other, they offer a positive programme of action to remedy the situation (Rao, 1982).

Check your Progress

1. What do you mean by Social Movement? Give two Definitions.
2. What are the basic characteristics of Social Movement?
3. What are the various types of Social Movements?
4. Discuss various theories of Social Movements propounded by social scientists.

2.5 Tribal Social Movement in India

Social mobility movements are known to India's lower Hindu castes which resulted in sanskritizing their caste practices. This trend spread to more castes during the British regime when the lower castes got better educational and economic opportunities, legal and political status. These movements became intensified due to the need to vindicate one (assumed) caste status at the time of census recording every 10 years (e.g. The Paundra Kshatriya of Bengal; Das Gupta, 2007). Communication facilities made wide scale contacts and organization among far flung sub-castes in various linguistic regions possible (Srinivas, 1957).

In the 19th century India, tribal groups were not much affected by such mobility movements. There were, however, some social movement in the nature of norm oriented movements (among the Munda, Santal and others) against the Hindu landlords and middlemen who were exploiting them, or dispossessing them of their land and in the nature of Messianic cults (e.g. Tana Bhagat movement among the Oraon of Bihar).

Deliberately organized collective efforts for a higher social status are not met with among the tribes till the Indian National Congress send its worker to the villages in the 1920s and directly involved some tribal groups such as the Bhumji, Kharia, Santal in Bihar and Bengal and the Bhumia and Bhattara in Orissa in national politics. Some tribal workers among the Bhumij (Sinha, 1959) and some non tribal Hindu workers as among the Kharia (Banerjee, 1959: 99-101) had been acquainted with the model of the political party organization and political meetings and the constructive reformatory work of the congress. In the case of the Bhumij an organization was started about 1935 to get their claim of Kshatriya (Hindu warrior caste, next highest to the Brahman) status recognized by the upper Hindu castes of the region. The non-tribal workers among the Kharia started welfare activities in 1939 and established branches at two places, but had to make this welfare organization the vanguard of a Kharia social movement for higher status (that of Hindu Kshatriya, and worshipper of lord Jagannath), better opportunities (land, rehabilitation, education, etc) and to eschew "evils" in their society (like drinking and criminal activities).

But, by and large, during the 1930s and thereafter, local self government and parliamentary democracy, economic political privileges for tribes and castes, opening of new economic opportunities such as tea gardens, factories, educational facilities and means of rapid communication and transportation and not least, the living and working together of people of various tribal origins in towns, factories, mines, etc., all prepared the ground for dissatisfaction directed against the dominant Hindu neighbours. The newly educated elite were very in demand by political parties after independence and consolidated tribal votes could easily act as a pressure group in order to further the ends of the tribal group concern and, by inferences, of its elite section. Therefore, we find the Bhumij, Santal, Munda, Gond, Ho, Kharia, Bhattara, Kond, and Jatapu relatively educated and in part Hinduized or Christianized, turning to political action and bargaining as informal pressure groups, political associations, or even as an intertribal political party. Among the lower class Hindus, although caste associations developed political dimensions, as pressure groups they never constituted themselves into an inter-caste political party or even formal political association on the basis of caste.

Simultaneously when social mobility movements were transforming themselves into political pressure groups, as political parties and associations were emerging to take care of inter-ethnic tribal interests, the colleges and high school students constituted themselves into student associations of Adivasi on an inter-ethnic level or regional basis. Also tribal music, dance and dress (though somewhat modified) were being revived in some areas by some erstwhile tribal political workers such as those among the Koya, Matia, Bonda, etc. in Koraput. The most significant development in this cultural revivalism seasoned with innovation has been the invention of indigenous scripts among the Saora in south Orissa, earlier among the Jatapu (a more educated, largely Hinduized Kond section in Koraput district) and since the 1940s among the Santal of north Orissa. But cultural creativity coupled with some form of revivalism has gone furthest among the Santal. The Santal innovator, a high school graduate who worked among the Santal industrial workers at the foremost steel city, Jamshedpur, has also contributed epics, dramas, songs and reinterpreted Santal religion and magic with moral and spiritual grafting. His followers have brought out books, a monthly journal, and textbooks for lower schools in the medium of the script and with a separate system of schools, curriculum, training schools and specially trained teachers. The Adivasi socio educational and Cultural Association to foster these and a religious organization, Sarna Dharam Semlet, to revived educational and Cultural Association to foster these and a religious organization, Sarna Dharam Semlet, to revived old communal worship in a sacred grove and other religious practices, have followed his leadership. Santal traditional dancing, certain forms of marriages, etc, and indulgences in pleasure are considered "evil", or "sinful". Thus a great Tradition of Redfield and Singer formulation is just emerging. But this preoccupation with cultural creativity, educational programmes, and religious revivalism are all blessed by, and directly beneficial to the jharkhand party, which fights for a state for the Adivasi (Scheduled Tribes) to be carved out of the states of Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh (Orans, 1965; unpublished documents, Mahapatra).

Thus, we find the emergences of several varieties of social movements among the Scheduled Tribes after independence; a political party on inter ethnic basis, pressure groups on ethnic basis as transformed social mobility movements, a revivalistic cultural movement, a cultural creativity and regeneration movement and religious (largely) revivalistic movement as wings of the inter- ethnic political party, and student association as pressure groups. These are in addition to social mobility movements as among the Juang, Kisan, Bathudi or Saora in Orissa, which were organized on the lines of regional association of important local cases for status mobility.

The major tribes of the region, the Santal, Kond, Oraon, Munda, Saora, Bhumij, Ho, Kharia, Koya, Kisan, Bhattara, Bhumia, Bathudi, and even Juang have already involved in one or the other categories of the social movements. It is not always correct to say that the whole of an ethnic group like the Juang or the Saora are drawn into any such movement, but a particular section especially that which has been chosen to live in the plains (Patnaik, 1963) or that which has received school education for a long time or the ones assembled at factory cities such as Jamshedpur as Rourkela within the tribal majority areas. Only such tribes as the semi-nomadic Birhor or Pahira, who are food gatherers, and some other small tribes like the Dhurwa and Dorla of western Orissa and Baster in Madhya Pradesh (Hazra, 1959; Thusu, 1959) do not yet show any development towards social mobility movements or the like.

2.6 Tribal Social Movement in North East India

Tribal Movements in the North East India are entirely different from those elsewhere in the country and stand in a category by themselves because of its unique geo-political situation and historical background. Many tribes living on the international boundaries traditionally acted as bridge or buffer communities until the advent of colonialism and shared ethnic and cultural affinities with tribesmen across the frontiers. Developments across the frontiers have had a profound influence on the situation in the North East. This region was also not completely integrated within the politico-economic system of colonialism: it remained relatively isolated from the cultural system of the mainland and the political upheavals of the freedom struggle. It is interesting to record that the entire system of the non-regulation administration had its origin in the experiences of the tribal uprising of 1820s in the Arakan hills, which is still disturbed. Many of the elements of this system were introduced elsewhere in the country while they tended to isolate the North-Eastern region all the more from the rest of the country. Yet another fact to be noted in regard to the development of the tribal movement in this region, as mentioned earlier is that unlike middle India the tribals everywhere except Tripura are in overwhelming majority and have never faced any threat of the kind to their identity that inspired the millenarian movements elsewhere in the country. Their institutions are relatively intact. They remain in possession of their land and forest. Therefore, there were no agrarian and forest based movements of the type that occur in middle India. Christianity has emerged as the strongest factor of modernization and has given the tribals as it has done elsewhere a strong sense of identity. Considering the geopolitical factor, the relative isolation from the political system and cultural influences from the mainland, the dominant form of movement has been political, seeking goals ranging from autonomy to independence and relying on means ranging from constitutional agitation to armed insurgency. Even the cultural movements in this region are only a dimension of these political processes.

The political processes in the north-eastern hills picked up on the eve of transfer of power and later as the secular and democratic system were consolidated. Old tribes assumed new names, small tribes merged with larger tribes, tribes combined to form new ethnic cum territorial identity. Beyond the territorial identity state were created to accommodate tribal aspiration for autonomy. In the process the Sixth Schedule model of autonomy for the north-east was exceeded. Nagaland enjoys more autonomy than other states as no law can apply to the Nagas unless it is approved by the State Assembly. This political process extending from the merger of tribes to formation of new territorial identity and to formation of state is a unique feature of the north eastern situation.

A cultural dimension of the political processes has been the phenomenal rise of Christianity in all north east states during the 1961-71 decade, as a symbol of tribal identity, as a marker of status in all the states except Arunachal Pradesh. Sanskritisation has not been at work in the north-eastern hills. The Brahma movement among the Bodo Kacharis stopped short of the hills. The sanskritisation process in the Manipur Valley has not only come to a stop, there is even an attempt at de-sanskritisation, an impulse to go back to the pre-Vaishnava, pristine form of Meitei culture. The nativistic Sanamahi cult has gained ground. Two other nativistic movements seek to revive the pure and pristine elements of tribal culture. The Seng Khasi, a socio-cultural organization of the Khasi was established as early as in 1989 to preserve the Khasi way of life, with its ancient system of clan relationship which was disturbed by the large scale conversion of the Khasis to Christianity. The second, the Zeliangrong movement, started as a religio-cultural movement under Jadonang, assumed a political overtone and became the only movement to have established linkages with the national freedom struggle. Under Rani Gaidinliu it has remained strongly nationalistic, has promoted tribal solidarity and demanded creation of a separate administrative unit to be formed out of territories inhabited by the constituent tribes in the contiguous regions of Manipur, Assam and Nagaland (Singh, 1982).

Check Your Progress

1. Discuss the basic characteristics of Tribal Social Movement.
2. How the various movements of North-East India are different from other Movements that took place in rest of India?
3. Give an overview of Tribal Movements in India with special reference to North-East India.

Suggested Reading

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Unit – III

Tribal Rights

3.0 Objectives

This Unit provides a broad overview of the rights the tribals of India ought to enjoy. After reading this Unit, you should be able to comprehend the following:

1. What are the rights of tribals over Land, Forest and Water?
2. What are the tribal rights over IPR (Intellectual Property Rights)?
3. What is the state of human rights in tribal regions?
4. The recommendations for ensuring legitimate rights to tribes.

3.1 Introduction

We already know that the tribal population in India constitutes about 8.2% of the total Indian population, and therefore, is demographically a fairly large group. Because of their social, educational and economic backwardness, special provisions have been made in the Constitution of India to safeguard their interest and promote their culture. However, in reality, there is a wide gap between the way they live and the way other populations live in India. It will not be wrong to say that while the rest of India enjoy the benefits of internet revolution, air travel, healthcare and educational opportunities, many of our fellow tribal brothers and sisters live in the 'stone age'. There are many reasons for the gap in the living conditions of tribes and others, one of the important reasons being the lack of awareness of the tribes about the rights conferred on them. Even if there is some amount of awareness, there are many obstacles that the tribals encounter in enjoying these rights. This Unit aims at providing a comprehensive account of some such rights and problems in enjoying them by the tribes of India.

3.2 Tribal Rights Over Land, Forest and Water

3.2.1 Tribal Rights Over Land

We know that tribal economy is largely agro-based and hence, land is the vital asset for a tribal. More than 90% of the tribes in India depends primarily on agriculture and thereby depend on land. But according to Census figures, there is a sharp decline in the percentage of tribal cultivators over the years and increase in tribal landless labourers. For example, while in 1961 India had 68.18% tribal cultivators, by 1981 it was decreased to 54.43%. Similarly, while in 1961, the percentage of tribal landless labourers 19.71, by 1981 it was increased to 32.67. What do these figures indicate? These figures indicate an increased state of land alienation in the tribal regions of India. Somehow, land is being transferred from the tribal owners to non-tribals or to elite among the tribals and the situation is getting worse day by day.

For centuries, if not millennia, the tribals had free access to land. Land was not considered as a scarce commodity due to its easy availability to the tribal cultivators. It was only at the beginning of the 20th Century, land in tribal areas became a scarce commodity due to infiltration of non-tribal communities into the tribal regions, eventually creating a fierce situation of competition for land. The customary ownership of land by the tribals was threatened. During the British period and subsequently many cumbersome legal provisions were made, which did not recognize the customary tribal ownership on land. Non-recognition of land right of tribals led to many sporadic unrest among the tribes. In post-Independence period, there was not much improvement in the situation, although a number of legal provisions were made to protect the tribal rights over land. We shall be discussing some of these aspects in the paragraphs that follow.

3.2.1.1 Laws to Prevent Land Alienation

Realizing the acute problem of tribals being landless over the years, and particularly in the Scheduled V Areas, due to the occupation of tribal land by the non-tribals, many States have come out with legal measures to protect tribal land. For example, in the State of Andhra Pradesh, the Government has promulgated 'Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Areas Land Transfer Regulation, 1959' (APSALTR, 1959). Section 3 of the Amended Regulation (1/1970) reads, "... any transfer of immovable property situated in the Agency tracts by a person, whether or not such person is a member of a Scheduled Tribe, shall be absolutely *null* and *void*, unless such transfer is made in favour of a person, who is a member of a Scheduled Tribe or a society registered or deemed solely of the members of the Scheduled Tribes". Similar Regulations have also been implemented in Orissa (Orissa Scheduled Areas Transfer of Immovable Properties [by Scheduled Tribes] Regulation of 1956), undivided Madhya Pradesh (Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code of 1959), Kerala (Kerala Scheduled Tribes [Restrictions on Transfer of Lands and Restoration of Alienated Lands] Act of 1975), and many other States of India.

Since the problem of land alienation is endemic in many tribal pockets of India, the Constituent Assembly had constituted two Sub-Committees to look into the matter of protection of tribal land. The Sub-Committee on North East Frontier (Assam) Tribal and Excluded Areas observed that "as the tribal people should have the largest possible measures of protection for their land, provisions should be made for the control of migration into their areas for agricultural or non-agricultural purposes". The Sub-Committee on Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas (other than Assam) recommended that "in view of the increased pressure on land everywhere, alienation of any kind of tribal land even to other tribals, may have to be prohibited or severely restricted in different stages of advancement". These observations and recommendations of the Sub-Committees have been incorporated in the provisions of the Fifth and Sixth Schedules of the Indian Constitution (Verma 1990).

Two other legal provisions need special mention here that relate to the problems of land alienation and their restoration in tribal areas. The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extensions to the Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA) of 1996 categorically empowers the Gram Sabhas (Village Councils) in the Scheduled Areas to put an end to alienation of tribal lands and to restore already alienated lands to the tribal land owners. Similarly, the Draft National Tribal Policy (A Policy for the Scheduled Tribes of India) of 2006 endorses that "Through this policy, it will be ensured that illegal transfer of tribal land holdings is eliminated and that the alienated land is restored to the tribal".

3.2.1.2 How Tribal Rights over Land is Vitiated?

Despite many constitutional and legal provisions, tribes are still victims of losing their rights over land. This is largely due to wide prevalence of mere customary rights of tribes over land and absence of 'legal rights'. The customary rights are the rights enjoyed by the tribals as such for generations over patches of *podu* or plain land for cultivation. Vast stretches of land were thus owned by the tribal communities as 'community land' or by tribal farmers as individually owned land. When the British administration in colonial India started land survey and settlement operations in the 19th Century, many tribal areas were not included in the survey and settlement process. Therefore, the tribal farmers could not get land titles (*pattas*), did not have to pay land taxes, and eventually cultivated some land without having legal rights over them. Even after Independence, faulty land surveys and incomplete land records in different States of India deprived the tribals to acquire the status of legal land owners, and hence they enjoyed only usufruct rights over the land they cultivated.

There have been, of course, many unscrupulous means by which the tribal farmers were cheated by non-tribals and elite among the tribals, and were eventually rendered landless. Through dubious sale, mortgage, lease, *benami* transfers, collusive decrees, fraudulent methods of land grabbing, marrying tribal women or through tribal concubines, buying land in the name of tribal servants, creating fictitious documents to encroach tribal land, etc. tribals are forced to give up their rights over land (Misra 2006).

In many instances the government-sponsored development projects, such as setting up of major and minor irrigation and power projects, industries and townships, mining activities, tribals are forced to lose their right over land. The stringency of Land Acquisition Act of 1894, devised during the colonial period, in acquiring land for 'public purposes' makes the tribals its soft victims. Although the Draft National Rehabilitation Policy, 2006 and various rehabilitation and resettlement policies devised by the States claim to have made ample provisions for the Scheduled Tribes in matters of payment of compensation, the reality is growing landlessness among tribal farmers in India. Given the present situation, unless all the constitutional and legal protections offered to the tribes are implemented in both letters and spirit, there is every possibility that no tribal can claim legal right over some land in the near future.

3.2.1.3 The Current Status of Tribal Landownership

We shall conclude this Section by revisiting the current status of landownership among the tribes of India. We know that all States have formulated legislative measures to allot land as well as to prevent land transfer from the tribals. Despite these measures, the situation of tribal landownership is grim. The Rural Labour Inquiry Report on General Characteristics of Rural Households, 1993-94, published by the Labour Bureau of the Ministry of Labour, Government of India, reveals that 30.10% of Scheduled Tribes in India are without any cultivated land. Kerala tops the list with 75.04% of its STs without cultivated land, followed by Tamil Nadu with 63.87% and Maharashtra with 52.02%. This is the reality. In its Mid-term Appraisal of the IX Five Year Plan (2000), none other than the Planning Commission of India has commented about the State of Andhra Pradesh that "... the lush green jungles of the Eastern Ghats, spread over nine districts of Andhra Pradesh and comprising 11,595 sq. miles of the state are no longer secure for nearly 33 tribal communities ... the tribals have steadily lost their hold on much of this area. While many have lost their sources of livelihood, others have sought refuge in deep forests ... The non-tribals are holding almost 55 per cent of tribal lands either *benami* or through clandestine means. The setting up of minor and medium irrigation projects in areas meant for tribals has been another way to dispossess the locals ... Government has been sanctioning many reservoirs, minor irrigation schemes, lift irrigation and medium canals in the tribal belt to facilitate the cultivation of land occupied by the people from the plains. While the non-tribal is holding the rich lands, the tribal has to depend on *podu* (hill slope) cultivation" (quoted in Mohanty 2005). The quotation is self-explanatory and describes the reality of tribal rights over land.

3.2.2 Tribal Rights over Forest

The relationship between tribes and forest is very old and intimate. The term 'vanabasi' used as a synonym for tribes in India literally means 'those who live in the forest'. It is a well known fact that the tribes in India depend on the forest for their requirements of food, fodder, fuel wood, materials for construction, herbal medicine, and raw materials for hunting, fishing and agricultural implements. This is the reason why tribals worship the forest as one of their gods.

Till the British came on the scene in India, tribals were the virtual owners and custodians of forest around them. Of course, there are a few instances where the kings and chiefs of the medieval times were keeping small patches of forest under their control either to catch elephants or to use as places for royal hunting expeditions

(Misra 2001). Barring these exceptions, tribes were synonymous with forest. But the situation changed since 1865, when the British government in India realized rapid destruction of Indian forest and promulgated the Forest Act, thereby extending the right of the State over forest and its resources. This was a severe blow to the tribes, **who enjoyed considerable freedom in the use of forest and its resources for many generations.** The situation further deteriorated after Independence with the forest policy of the Indian government in line with the pre-independence policies. In this Section, we shall discuss some of the salient features of the forest acts and policies in India that have eventually threatened the rights of the tribes over forest.

3.2.2.1 Forest Acts and Policies in India vis-à-vis Tribes

By the time the British administration in India realized that the best of the Indian forests were devastated to serve the strategic colonial interests, it was already too late. Therefore, in 1865 the Supreme Legislative Council in colonial India passed the first Forest Act, which authorized the State to declare forest and wastelands as reserved (Misra 2001). This was the beginning of snatching away of customary tribal rights over forest, which they were enjoying for centuries. In 1878 another Forest Act repealed the earlier Act of 1865 and empowered the State to close reserve forests for people and impose penalties for any transgression of the Act. According to this Act, the tribal use of forest was no more a 'right' but a 'privilege'. The last nail on the coffin of tribal rights over forest was placed with the promulgation of Indian Forest Act of 1927 denying even entry of tribal people into the forest.

The spirit of the Indian Forest Act of 1927 continued in post-Independence period, tightening the grip of the State over forest by disregarding the customary rights over tribals. On the top of it, the Forest Policy of 1952 withdrew all concessions on the release of forest land for cultivation by the tribes, bringing even private forests under state control, introduction of grazing fees, and discouraging shifting cultivation that was the mainstay of livelihood for many tribes in India. However, the Revised Forest Policy of 1988 brought some relief to the tribes, as it advocated people's participation in protection and development of forests, from which they derive benefit in the form of firewood, fodder and small timbers.

There are many other Acts besides the Forest Acts and Policies that severely affect the customary tribal rights over forest. For example, The Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972 and Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act of 1991 denied the tribes to use forest for hunting wild games, which once constituted their main food reserve. Another amendment to the Wildlife (Protection) Act is in the offing to make the Act more stringent with an intention to protect the wild animals. Similarly, the Forest (Conservation) Act of 1980 and the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Act of 1988 did not allow forest communities to enter into the forest, thereby ignoring the fact that once the tribes were the sole owners, users and protectors of the Indian forest. Growing number of wildlife sanctuaries, national parks and bio-reserves have been responsible for dispensing with the rights of the tribes over forest in their vicinity.

There is, however, some hope among the tribal communities in India that the most recent The Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill of 2005, which has been passed by the Lok Sabha during the winter session of the Parliament in 2006 and awaiting Presidential assent to become an Act. Broadly, this Act aims at recognizing, restoring and vesting of forest rights to the tribes, which they were enjoying for generations. The Draft National Tribal Policy of 2006 also takes cognizance of the customary rights of the tribes over forest and ensures to protect them by all means. The Panchayats Extension to the Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act of 1996 also largely empowers the tribal Panchayats and Gram Sabhas in the Schedule V areas to take control over all the natural resources under their jurisdiction, including forest, and assert their rights over them.

3.2.2.2 Tribal Rights over Minor Forest Produce (MFP)

We know that Minor Forest Produce (MFP) is a means of livelihood for the tribes for generations. Excellent indigenous environmental knowledge of the tribes, experimented and perfected over centuries, has made them the best users of MFP. Although earlier MFP had only subsistence value for the tribes, now many of them have very high commercial value, and are a source of cash income for the tribes. Although the tribals can collect the MFPs, the State has monopoly over these produces, as many of them are declared as nationalized items. So, the trading right vests with the State while the tribal-collector gets a meager amount for collecting and selling them to the State-run corporations or to the Forest Department.

MFPs like Tendu leaves, gum, lac, cane, oil seeds, bamboo, grasses, tanning extracts, dyes, etc. have high commercial value. Vast revenue collected from these items goes to the State exchequer, but the tribal-collector is always impoverished. Tribals literally do not have the right over the MFP that they grow in their kitchen garden, as the State claims right over them under the prevailing Forest Act.

However, the Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill of 2005, the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act of 1996, and the Draft National Tribal Policy, etc. have made provisions to recognize and restore tribal rights over MFP.

3.2.3 Tribal Rights over Water

Tribals in India have been enjoying customary right over the water bodies around their habitat as in the case of land and forest. While selecting sites for new villages, the tribal elders and priests make sure that the new habitat has ample water required for day to day use of the humans and the domestic animals. Existence of a perennial source of water near the human habitations is given primacy by the tribals, as water is not only used for drinking purpose or for sanitary uses, but also as a source of irrigation, fishing and religious activities. Precisely for this, indigenous communities all over the world, including India, had the collective right over water as a common property and water management was a collective responsibility.

Realizing the decline in the rights over water, the indigenous communities of the world have asserted the following in a declaration, popularly known as 'Indigenous Peoples' Kyoto Water Declaration' of 2003:

1. We, the Indigenous Peoples from all parts of the world assembled here, reaffirm our relationship to Mother Earth and responsibility to future generations to raise our voices in solidarity to speak for the protection of water. We were placed in a sacred manner on this earth, each in our own sacred and traditional lands and territories to care for all of creation and to care for water.
2. We recognize, honor and respect water as sacred and sustains all life. Our traditional knowledge, laws and ways of life teach us to be responsible in caring for this sacred gift that connects all life.
3. Our relationship with our lands, territories and water is the fundamental physical cultural and spiritual basis for our existence. This relationship to our Mother Earth requires us to conserve our freshwaters and oceans for the survival of present and future generations. We assert our role as caretakers with rights and responsibilities to defend and ensure the protection, availability and purity of water. We stand united to follow and implement our knowledge and traditional laws and exercise our right of self-determination to preserve water, and to preserve life.

In India, there are three possible property regimes of water. Water may be owned by (1) individuals (as groundwater in backyards), (2) the State as public property (surface water in rivers, lakes, oceans), and (3) communities as common property (tanks with community ownership). However, in difficult terrains of tribal areas, the use of surface water of the rivers, lakes or perennial hill streams is quite common. But since these water sources are considered as the property of the State, ignoring the customary rights of the tribals on them. When large dams are constructed on the river beds, the tribals living downstream find their river beds dry. They are deprived of water for drinking and for daily necessities, fishing, irrigating their agricultural fields, etc. Sometimes the problems are compounded when industries on river banks release polluted water to the river, causing untold health miseries of the tribals using such water. There are many instances of polluted water released from the chemical, leather, paper and similar industries that cause health hazards among the tribals.

Although there is no specific legislation in India with regard to the rights of tribals on water bodies, Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act of 1996, Draft National Policy on Tribals of 2006, etc. have empowered the tribal panchayats or Gram Sabhas to exercise control over the natural resources, including water, under their jurisdictions.

Check Your Progress – I

1. What are the legal protections offered to the Scheduled Tribes of India with regard to alienation and restoration of their land? What are the fraudulent means adopted by which tribal lands are transferred to non-tribals?
2. Discuss the role of different forest acts and policies in India that denigrated the tribal customary rights over forests.
3. Delineate different property regimes of water in India and discuss how the tribals suffer on account of loss of traditional water rights.

3.3 Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and Indian Tribes

1.3.1 What is Intellectual Property Right (IPR)?

As the term Intellectual Property Right indicates, it is all about the rights over the intellect of an individual or a community, and intellect is always a product of mind. Therefore, intellectual property is a very broad concept, including many products of human mind, such as ideas, information, concepts, strategies and models. A legal entitlement to such products of mind may be called as Intellectual Property Right.

Many items come under the purview of Intellectual Property Laws. These may be the copyrights of creative and artistic works, patents for new inventions, a trademark or a distinct sign of a product or a manufacturing company or an institution, an industrial design, a trade secret, etc. But what do these properties have to do with the tribals? In the paragraphs that follow, we shall discuss the bearings of Intellectual Property Rights on the tribal communities of India.

1.3.2 IPR and the Tribes of India

In common parlance, tribals are considered to be illiterate and hence, backward and uncreative. But tribal mind always experiments with the nature, and new ideas and concepts always flow from the tribal mind. The tribal predicament is that the tribal innovator cannot document the outcomes of such innovations and give them wider publicity as it happens in the educated world. These innovations are the traditional knowledge of the tribals with local significance. But some of these innovations are so global in scope that they can be compared with any innovation of a Research and Development Laboratory of a sophisticated industry.

We know that the tribes in India have extensive knowledge about their environment. Their knowledge of agriculture, soil, forest, trees, wild animals, insects, MFPs, weather phenomena, and so on are time tested and often elaborate. The floral and animal designs on the walls, house designs in difficult terrains, varied designs on textiles, designing agricultural and hunting implements, excellent musical instruments, choreography of local dance forms – all these and many others are the products of tribal mind, which are hardly recognized, and once recognized, are used by the non-tribals without acknowledging the fact that these are intellectually owned by the tribals. This is sheer violation of IPR of the tribals.

An example here will suffice. The use of neem (*Azadirachta indica*) leaves, barks, flowers and fruits as medicine, insecticide and in oil extraction is known to the Indian tribes since time immemorial. But someone in the U.S.A. has tried to patent the neem extracts and has claimed that it was the result of his own innovation. Here is gross violation of IPR of the original users back in India. Similarly, basmati rice, medicinal uses of turmeric, many herbal products that have been in use in tribal and rural communities in India are being patented in the West, ignoring the IPR of these products.

There are many tribal and rural communities outside India which possess excellent indigenous knowledge that is being used at the service of the humanity in different forms. For example, Thai traditional healers use *plao-noi* to treat ulcer, indigenous healers of the Western Amazon use *Ayahuasca* vine to prepare various medicines imbued with sacred properties, the San people use *hoodia* cactus to get relief from hunger when they go out for hunting, etc., which are the products of constant process of innovation by the tribal and rural people.

3.3.3 Intellectual Properties and their Protection

Violations of IPR of the tribes and indigenous people of the world are rampant, as they do not have access to the cumbersome legal mechanism. Therefore, two forms of IP-related protection have been developed and applied internationally. The first is the 'positive protection' that gives the holders of intellectual properties the right to take action or seek remedies against certain forms of misuse of indigenous knowledge. The second is 'defensive protection', which is a safeguard against illegitimate IP rights taken by others than those who are the original innovators. In fact, these two approaches for protection of IPR are complimentary to each other, and hence, are taken together for the protection of tribal rights over their intellectual properties.

International pressure has been mounting because of large-scale bio-piracy and violation of IPR of the poor and marginalized communities all over the world. Therefore, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) of 1992, held at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, makes exclusive provisions for respect and recognition of indigenous knowledge and strives for fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. The U.N. Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) of 1994 has also provided for the protection of traditional knowledge as well as the sharing of benefits arising from any commercial utilization of such knowledge. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has undertaken extensive capacity building task on indigenous knowledge, including on aspects of legal protection and equitable benefit sharing.

3.3.4 New Experiments of IPR and Benefit Sharing in India

New experiments are beginning to emerge on benefit sharing models for indigenous innovation. An Indian experience is worth sharing at this juncture. "It relates to a medicine that is based on the active ingredient in a plant, *Trichopus zeylanicus*, found in the tropical forests of southwestern India and collected by the Kani tribal people. Scientists at the Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (TBGRI) in Kerala learned of the plant, which is claimed to bolster the immune system and provide additional energy, while on an expedition with

the Kani in 1987. These scientists isolated and tested the ingredient and incorporated it into a compound, which they christened "Jeevani", the giver of life. The tonic is now being manufactured by a major Ayurvedic drug company in Kerala. In 1995, an agreement was struck for to share the license fee and 2% of sales of the product as royalty, that was receivable by TBGRI, will be shared on a fifty-fifty basis with the tribe. This marks perhaps the first time that for IP held by a tribe, a compensation in the form of cash benefits has gone directly to the source of the IP holders" (Mashelkar 2005). This kind of benefit sharing should be repeated in many other cases, where the tribes could at least benefit from their traditional knowledge with recognition and remuneration.

With the rapid process of globalization, uncodified traditional knowledge of the tribes is definitely going to be misappropriated by the powerful few, as the tribals have least access to the legal protections. With this view, the Government of India has taken the lead in the creation of Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) to link it with International Patent Classification System (IPC), so that enormous tribal innovations could be protected for the benefit of the tribes.

Check Your Progress – II

1. What is IPR and what items come under the purview of intellectual properties?
2. Discuss the relationship between intellectual properties and the tribes in India.
3. How benefit sharing under the IPR is possible? Explain with the example of the Kani tribes of south India.

3.4 Human Rights and the Tribes in India

3.4.1 What are Human Rights?

Human Rights are essentially rooted in the Western political thought and cover a wide range of ideas and concepts in defense of the basic rights of the citizens of a State. The issues of human rights gained currency during and after the post-war period when many instances of genocide, torture and abuse of basic human rights of political victims came to the lime light.

In order to defend the rights of their citizens, numerous charters and agreements are signed by the States. However, at the global level, we have the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. While Articles 1 to 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights deal with the civil and political rights of the people, Articles 22 to 28 deal with the economic, social and cultural rights. At the Second United Nations World Conference on Human Rights in 1993 in Vienna, along with social, economic, political and cultural rights, 'right to development' was recognized as a universal and integral part of the fundamental human rights.

3.4.2 Rights of the Tribes and Indigenous People

Keeping in mind the marginalized state of the tribes and indigenous people globally and frequent abuse of their fundamental human rights, many international instruments have made provisions to safeguard their interests. We shall deal with only a couple of them. The International Labour Office Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (No. 169) in its Article 7 reads: "The peoples concerned shall have the right to decide their own priorities for the process of development as it affects their lives, beliefs, institutions and spiritual well-being and ... to exercise control ... over their own economic, social and cultural development. In addition they shall participate in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of plans and programmes for national and regional developments which may affect them directly". Similarly, the Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious or Linguistic Minorities (Adopted by the U.N. General Assembly, Resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992) in its Article 2 (1) states: "Persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities (hereinafter referred to as persons belonging to minorities) have the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, and to use their own language, in private or ethnic public, freely and without interference or any form of discrimination". Many other international instruments also ensure that the tribal and indigenous people enjoy the fundamental human rights and live with self-dignity. But the reality is that more than their rights, the tribes are the victims of abuses, about which we shall discuss in this Section.

3.4.3 Constitutional Rights of the STs of India

The Constitution of India has made many special provisions for the Scheduled Tribes such that the members of these communities exercise their basic fundamental rights as the citizens of the country. Extension of educational and economic opportunities (Article 46), appointment of a Minister to look after the tribal affairs exclusively (Article 164), special administration of scheduled areas and tribal areas (Article 244), reservation of seats for STs in the Lok Sabha (Article 330) and in the Legislative Assemblies of the States (Article 332), reservation of seats and special representations (Article 334), special claims to services and posts (Article 335), and so on are guaranteed by the Constitution. Yet, the ground reality is different and the tribes do not enjoy the basic rights. We shall discuss some of these themes below.

3.4.4 Abuses of Human Rights in Tribal India

We shall discuss here some of the human right abuses in tribal India. However, it must be remembered that this is not an exhaustive discussion, but only in the form of examples.

3.4.4.1 Land and Territories

We have learned elsewhere that organized political or legal intrusion did not occur in tribal areas until the rise of the British power in India. The Forest Acts of 1865, 1878 and 1927 during the British administration and the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 (and its Amendments in 1991), Forest Conservation Act of 1980, etc. gradually yet forcefully snatched away the customary rights of the tribes over their land and forest. Their access even to the grazing land and forest for collection of MFPs was restricted. The tribes thus are now a demoralized lot without a viable alternative manage their livelihoods.

Furthermore, with the influx of non-tribal population into the tribal pockets all over the country, land alienation has assumed alarming proportion in these areas, about which we have briefed elsewhere in this Unit. Land alienation has created serious human rights problems particularly for the dispersed or relatively sparsely populated tribal peoples of Southern and Western India. However, the tribes in North-east Indian States, such as Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Mizoram, the tribes have retained control of most of their lands because of the legal prohibition on the transfer of lands to outsiders and also due to restrictions on travel. The National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes found that 83% of the total bonded labourers in India come from the STs, which clearly portrays the situation of human rights abuse in tribal areas.

3.4.4.2 Involuntary Displacement

After Independence, a new era of planned development dawned on India with the construction of large dams, establishment of heavy industries, expansion of defence establishments, exploration of new mines, and conversion of jungles into wildlife sanctuaries and national parks. All these activities required acquisition of land, and incidentally since the tribal areas in our country are rich in natural resources, enormous amount of tribal land was acquired for these projects. As a result, many tribal villages had to be relocated, the people had to be rehabilitated, which eventually led to an ecological and cultural disaster for the tribes. The basic tribal right of living in its own homeland has been violated with the draconian Land Acquisition Act of 1894. Although the National Policy on Resettlement and Rehabilitation of 2003 and many State policies have specifically declared in their objectives that all efforts should be made to minimize displacement, the trend continues unabated, resulting in cultural genocide of the tribes in India. This is a gross violation of human rights in tribal areas of India. The following Table is indicative of the magnitude of tribal displacement in India.

Tribal Displacement by Development Projects, 1951-1990

Sl. No	Causes of Displacement	No. of Tribal People Displaced
1	Dams	5,300,000
2	Mines	1,400,000
3	Industry	260,000
4	Sanctuaries and National Parks	500,000
5	Others	150,000
	Total	7,610,000

(Source: W.Fernandes (1991) Power and Powerlessness: Development Projects and Displacement of Tribals, *Social Action*, 41 (3), July-September, p. 256.)

3.4.4.3 Denial of Political Rights and Autonomy

We know that the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution of India ushered in a new era in the history of modern India, empowering the local political bodies or panchayats. But since the Amendment was not automatically applicable to the Scheduled Areas, the Government of India came out with the Provisions of the Panchayat (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act of 1996. The Scheduled Areas and Tribal Areas are already specified in accordance with the provisions in Article 244 and the 5th and 6th Schedules of the Indian Constitution. The Extension Act is one of the potent legislative measures of recent times, which recognizes the tribal people's mode of living, aspirations, their culture and traditions. However, studies to assess the implementation of the Extension Act and to examine as to what extent the 1996 Act was able to establish grassroots democracy in Scheduled Areas in accordance with the ethos of the tribal people reveal that nothing notable has taken place in these areas and that the condition of the tribals remain more or less what it was before.

Despite a tribal-centered Central Act, some State Acts do not deal sufficiently with important provisions of the Extension Act like ownership of minor forest produce, prevention of alienation of land, control over natural resource, etc. This shows widespread apathy on the part of the State Government towards the tribal areas and their resistance to give so much power to the tribal institutions. On the other hand, violations of tribal rights take place at regular intervals. In December 2001 in the State of Madhya Pradesh, tribals who were relying on fishing for their livelihood in a reservoir as their sole means of subsistence were up in arms against the State Government as they feared that steps were being taken to deny them the right to market their produce. It is common that Scheduled Tribe men and women who get elected to office are not allowed to function in the decentralized institutions of self-government. Elected tribal women members face violence and rape if they dare to challenge the authority of the officials or the powerful.

Many tribal communities have been demanding more political autonomy as a part of their democratic right. Although the Government of India conceded to the demands of the tribals for the formation of Jharkhand, Chhatisgarh and Uttarakhand, many such demands are pending, particularly from the tribes of the North-east India. The Naga nationalism, Mizo insurrection, Bodo people's struggle for autonomy, etc. are some of the examples of assertion of political rights by the tribes.

Whenever there is a demand for political autonomy by the tribes of North-east India, they are suppressed by invoking the draconian Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958. According to this Act, the non-commissioned officers belonging to the Indian security forces are empowered to kill indigenous peoples with impunity under the guise of maintaining law and order. Rape and murder of Miss Thangjam Manorama on 11 July 2004 by the 17th Assam Rifles in Imphal, Manipur is still fresh in the memory of many. Fast unto death demonstration in New Delhi by Ms. Shramila to repeal this Act has certainly generated political heat, yet the Act is still in force.

3.4.4.4 Recommendations

Unless the Government of India meets all international human rights standards according to its international commitments, recognizes STs as 'indigenous people' and comply with the obligations under the ILO Convention No. 107 and ratify the ILO Convention No. 169, ensure their rights to land, forest, water and other natural resources, initiates peace dialogues with the leaders of political autonomy movements, strengthens human rights institutions, revitalizes specialized institutions like the National Commissioner of SCs and STs, take expeditious steps to repeal the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, grants effective autonomy to the tribes of India, the problems of human rights in tribal areas cannot be solved.

We can see a silver lining on the otherwise dark horizon is the alertness of the Indian judiciary in handling the cases of human rights, although the process is notoriously slow. We hope, the judiciary rises to everybody's expectations in positively intervening in human right cases. Moreover, the introduction of the Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill of 2005, the Provisions of Panchayat (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) PESA Act of 1996, etc. show a ray of hope for the tribal people of India in leading a life of self-dignity.

Check Your Progress – III

1. What do you understand by human rights? What are the international provisions to protect the rights of the tribes and indigenous peoples?
2. Discuss the constitutional provisions in India for safeguarding the interest of the STs.
3. Attempt a brief essay on the cases of human rights violation in the tribal regions of India.

3.5 Let Us sum Up

In this Unit, we discussed some of the issues related to the rights of the Indian tribes. These included their rights over land, forest, water and the way they are deprived of exercising their genuine rights. Then we discussed the issue of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and how the tribes do not enjoy the benefit of sharing their knowledge with others. However, the example of the Kani tribe of South India is discussed as a new experiment of receiving recognition and remuneration by sharing their knowledge on herbal medicines. Finally, we discussed the issue of human rights among the tribes of India and the cases of frequent abuse of these rights, leaving the tribes as paupers in their own homeland, despite many constitutional and legal provisions to protect their rights. We have made some recommendation also at the end to restore the rights of the tribes of India.

3.6 Key Words

- Scheduled V Areas : Article 244 (i) of the Indian Constitution provides for a 5th Schedule, which can be applied to any State other than those in North-east India. The Governor of the States having Schedule V Areas are given extensive powers for the administration of these areas in pursuance of tribal values and ethos.
- Gram Sabha : The democratic body at the village level with all adult members of the village as its members has now immense constitutional powers after the implementation of PESA of 1996.
- Patta : A legal document confirming title over land.
- Benami : Transfer of land in the name of a fictitious person.
- Intellectual Property Right : Right over the properties that are the results of the innovations of human mind, viz. ideas, concepts, strategies, models, etc.
- Human Rights : Basic rights of a person as a citizen of a State.
- Involuntary Displacement : Unwilling displacement of a person or a group of persons from an original habitat.

3.7 Check Your Learning

1. Discuss the constitutional and legal provisions for the protection of tribal lands and the way in which these are violated leading to land alienation.
2. Delineate the evolution of forest acts and policies in India and gradual elimination of tribal customary rights over forest and MFPs.
3. What do you mean by IPR and how the tribes of India are the victims of its violations?
4. Discuss various means of abuse of human rights in tribal regions of India and recommend how to ensure rights to the tribals.

3.8 Suggested Readings

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3.9 Hints/Answers to Questions in Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress – I

1. Discuss the provisions of APSALTR or MPLRC as examples. Also discuss the fraudulent means by which land is transferred from tribal owners to the non-tribals.
2. Discuss the forest acts and policies beginning from 1865 till the present and show how tribal rights over forest are gradually lost.
3. Discuss how water is owned by individuals, the State and the communities and examine how the loss of water rights affects the health and livelihoods of the tribes in India.

Check Your Progress – II

1. Discuss the meaning of IPR as rights over innovations of human mind. Also discuss the copy rights, patents, etc. that come under the intellectual properties.
2. Discuss the rich traditional knowledge possessed by the tribes which is transmitted orally as intellectual properties.
3. Examine how the Kani tribes has benefited from sharing their knowledge to herbal medicine with the research institution and the Ayurvedic drugs manufacturing company.

Check Your Progress – III

1. Define human rights. Discuss the provisions of the ILO Convention No. 169, U.N. General Assembly Resolution 47/135, etc. stating the rights of the tribes and indigenous peoples of the world.
2. Discuss some of the important provisions in the Indian Constitution to safeguard the interests of the Scheduled Tribes.
3. Discuss the issues of violation in human rights in land and territories, in displacement and rehabilitation and in asserting in political rights and autonomy.

Unit IV Emerging Social Problems

4.0 Objectives

When you complete reading this Unit, you will be able to understand the following social problems the tribes of India face today:

- 1) The problems of the aged, access to education and literacy, malnutrition of the children, alcoholism and drug abuse mostly among the youth, child labour, trafficking, spread of HIV/AIDS, gender discrimination, safe drinking water and reproductive health among the tribes of India.

4.1 Introduction

Despite the firm commitment by the Government of India to ameliorate the plights and tribulations of the Scheduled Tribes population, Indian tribes are still disadvantaged and marginalized due to the age-old system of social inequality and the stigma attached to them. However, the concern and commitment of the Government is conspicuous, which may be traced back to the very first session of the Constituent Assembly in December 1946, when Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had moved the resolution on the declaration of objectives, and tribal areas and depressed and other backward classes". This commitment was reflected in the Article 46 under the Directive Principles of State Policies in Part IV of the Constitution, which reads: "The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitations".

The reality, however, is different. Tribes in India still face many social, demographic, economic, political and moral problems. Reservations and other forms of 'protective discrimination' have certainly helped a few of them, but the majority is still in the grips of varied crises. In this Unit, we shall discuss some of these problems briefly.

4.2 Problems of the Aged

4.2.1 What is Ageing?

We know that ageing is a natural and universal process for all organisms. It is also an inevitable and irreversible process for the humans that manifests conspicuously at three levels: physical (bio-physiological), psychological (behavioural) and socio-cultural. With the increase in age, there is progressive deterioration of wide range of human abilities, from physical strength and stamina to intelligence. From a psychological point of view, ageing brings with it an overall dissatisfaction and difficulties of adjustment along with many psychosomatic disorders, viz. mania, depression, senility, psychosis and dementia. The socio-cultural aspect of ageing refers to the changes in a person's socio-cultural environment as a member of the family, clan and community. These are commonly manifested in the completion of parental roles, retirement from work, reduction in income. Anthropologists have inferred that "Aged people tend to become more cautious and rigid in their behaviour, and so, prefer to limit their social contact. These behaviour patterns may also be the result of social institutions and the expectancies, rather than an intrinsic phenomenon of ageing".

Because of the growing ageing population worldwide, the study of the aged has now become a subject of specialized scientific research of inter-disciplinary nature. Within the confines of social sciences, this study and research has resulted in a new discipline, known as 'social gerontology'. The sociologist, E. W. Burgess (1958) has defined this subject as the study of statuses and roles of older persons, their culture patterns, social organization and collective behaviour, as they are affected by social changes.

4.2.2 The Concept of Age in Tribal Societies

Tribes in India recognize successive stages of human life according to the progression of age and categorize life into infancy, childhood, adulthood and old age. The division of labour is quite distinct with different sets of rights and responsibilities associated with each stage of life. While younger people of the community are considered to be adventurous and agile, older people are seen as experienced advisors to the younger lots and crisis managers. Becoming old is more than a just a biological process for the tribes; it has also socio-cultural parameters. A person with children and grand children, who rarely ventures into arduous economic activities, is considered old by the tribal people.

Division of labour is very well observed in the age-grade and age-set systems of tribal organization in India. For example, age-grades in the Oraon *dhumkuria* or youth dormitory are three, each one having clearly defined duties. In a Muria *ghotul*, there is a semblance of two grades. In all these age-grade systems, the junior members are taught to obey the senior members, and the ideal of respecting elder persons of the community in a way begins in the youth dormitories of the tribes. The process of socialization also lends support to the idea of showing deference to the elderly persons of the community. Usually the village council in a tribal village consists of elderly persons and they are nominated as political leaders because of their experience and expertise in handling community matters. In many tribal villages, conventionally, the eldest person of the first settled clan is considered as the village chief. Therefore, elderly persons have a relatively higher social status in a tribal village.

4.2.3 Problems of the Aged in Tribal Societies

Ageing has emerged today as a social problem not only due to the rise of the elderly population due to the decline in the mortality rate as a result of relatively better health care, but also due to rapid socio-economic and technological changes through which societies undergo. Although the pace of such changes is relatively slow in tribal societies, they are far from being completely insulated from the effects of these changes. So, the elderly people have to face this problem in tribal societies as well, although in a relatively lesser degree. According to Sachchidananda (1989), problems of the aged are two-fold: "The first refers to consequences of old age, such as alienation, loss of status and shifting of loyalties from the family of orientation to the family of procreation. Secondly, it affects the structure and function of the family ... The problem has been aggravated in recent times by the decline of joint family which earlier provided not only emotional strength for the old, but also security and adjustment". Despite all these, many studies show that the aged among the tribals have a remarkable degree of adjustment to the realities of life. Toppo (2000), for example, writes that "Some specific qualities of tribal and rural old are self-confidence, sociability, mobility, ability and responsibilities, and adjustment to social situations. Their cheerfulness, skill of doing things, personality, facial expressions make their temperament warmer and affectionate which attracts peoples of various generations".

4.3 Access to Education and Literacy among the Tribes

4.3.1 Tribal Literacy in India

Although tribes in India are making rapid strides in business, administration, professions of many kinds, defence services and in politics, their rate of literacy compared to the all-India figure still remains low. According to 1991 Census of India, the rate of literacy among the STs stood at 29.6% as against the general literacy of 52.2% at the all-India level. The respective rates of literacy of ST males and females were 40.6% and 18.1%.

which clearly indicate the deploring state of female literacy. Of course, some of the States in North-east India had remarkably high rates of literacy. For example, while Nagaland had 60.5% literates, Mizoram had 82.7%. Meghalaya had 46.7% and Manipur had 53.6% literates as per the 1991 Census. On the contrary, in Andhra Pradesh the rate of ST literacy stood at a mere 17.1%, while in Madhya Pradesh it was 21.5% and in Orissa the literacy rate among STs was 22.3%. Although there is a rise in the rate of tribal literacy from 29.6% at the all-India level in 1991 to 47.1% in 2001, more than half of the tribal population is illiterates. The question now is what are the bottlenecks that contribute to poor literacy rate and come on the way of tribal education in India? We shall discuss some of these issues below.

4.3.2 Reasons for Low Literacy among the Tribes

If we analyze the factors that mostly contribute to the low rate of literacy among the tribes and their access to modern education, many reasons come to our mind, some of which we shall discuss below.

Poverty of the tribal parents most often refrains their children to go to school. Since most of the tribes in India still depend on agriculture and foraging as their principal modes of livelihood, human resources are very important in these kinds of economic pursuits. The children help their parents in almost all agricultural activities, grazing of cattle, collection of firewood and edible forest produce, fishing and allied activities. Therefore, the tribal parents are not inclined to send their children to school. An interesting example from the Nicobar Archipelago will suffice here. When a researcher asked a Nicobarese as to why did they not send their children to school, the quick reply was: "If all our children go to school, who will climb the coconut trees?"

The curricula designed for the school children in India is the same as the non-tribal children. This often confuses the tribal children, because things familiar to them, such as the forest, wildlife, natural things around them are missing from the curricula. This contributes to the general disinterest of tribal children in studies, resulting in huge rate of dropouts. Moreover, the medium of instruction at lower classes is certainly not in tribal languages or dialects. The teachers do not speak the language of the tribes in most of the cases. Education in an alien language makes a tribal child disinterested in studies resulting in dropouts, although Article 350 (A) of the Indian Constitution specifically provides for adequate facilities for instruction in mother tongues at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups.

The tribal areas also suffer from inadequacy of educational infrastructure, such as enough number of schools, and boarding and lodging facilities. Many schools in tribal villages are sanctioned in paper, but without a proper building or a teacher. Timely and adequate support like scholarships, mid-day meals, book banks, etc. are very insignificant and generally do not attract the tribal children to attend to schools.

Absenteeism of school teachers is one of the important factors affecting education in tribal areas. There are instances where school teachers remain absent for days together, for which the tribal children lose interest in studies. There is lack of proper supervision to ensure teacher attendance, as the higher officials infrequently visit schools in tribal areas. When the teacher does not come to the school regularly, the tribal parents feel it unnecessary to send their children to school and engage them in other activities that are required for earning livelihood for the family. Lack of family or peer pressure results in dropping out of the tribal children from the schools.

Sometimes the schools are located in interior tribal areas and the teachers complain that it is difficult for them to cover large distances by walk everyday due to lack of any kind of transport facility. Some other times they complain about unrealistic teacher-student ratio in schools in tribal areas. There are a large number of single-teacher schools, where one teacher has to handle five classes alone. Further, there are no incentives for the teachers working in tribal schools. All these and other factors undoubtedly affect the literacy rate and educational status of the tribal children in India.

We should realize that the status of female education in tribal areas is very very discouraging in India. There are many socio-cultural factors that come on the way of female education among the tribes. Since girls are considered as the property of the in-laws after their marriage, there is some degree of reluctance on the part of the parents to invest in their education. Moreover, girls are married off quite early in life in the tribal areas, which is a disincentive for their education. Further, there is always a fear in the minds of the parents that once the daughter is educated, she gives up all the family traditions and it would be difficult to find a suitable match for her. Additionally, girls are anyway economic assets to their natal families, and hence, parents do not like to send them to schools.

4.3.3 National Educational Policy

Article 45 of the Indian Constitution mandated the States to direct their policies towards ensuring "free and compulsory education for all children until they completed the age of fourteen years". In India, the first National Policy on Education was framed in 1968, which was renewed in 1986. The National Policy of Education (NPE), 1986 and its subsequent modifications in 1992 laid down clearly the following targets to achieve universalization of education at Primary stage: (i) Provision of universal access to all eligible children by opening of formal or non-formal education centres within a reasonable distance of one kilometer; (ii) Retention of all children in schooling centres and ensuring completion of 5 years of basic education; and (iii) Provisions of quality education whereby all children achieve minimum achievement level as per the standard. The National Curriculum Framework for School Education 2000 states that "the medium of instruction ideally, ought to be the mother tongue at all the stages of school education. In the case of the learners whose mother tongue and the regional languages are different, the regional language may be adopted as the medium of instruction from the third standard".

What concerns us here is that despite several recommendations made by the linguists and anthropologists, and distinct and specific constitutional provisions, teaching and learning in mother tongue for a tribal child has remained a distant dream. This does not only create problems for a tribal child to learn and conceptualize things, but most importantly culminates in developing a sense of defeatism and loss of interest in patronizing his/her language. For example, Fürer-Haimendorf (1982) observes that in Orissa, many prayers and magical formulae are also spoken in Oriya by the Bonda tribe, as the Bondas think it proper that deities and spirits be addressed in a 'superior language'. The illiterate and economically backward tribes have no resources to assert their linguistic and cultural consciousness and therefore are subdued to change. As a result, language becomes a political tool for social division. Pattanayak has aptly reported that "Use of language can become a major factor in creating unequal societies in multilingual contexts. As long as this inequality persists education cannot be conflict free" (1990).

4.4 Malnutrition among the Tribes of India

4.4.1 What is Malnutrition?

Health is a prerequisite for human development and is an essential component for the wellbeing of the humankind. There is a general agreement that the health status of the tribal population in India is very poor and many scholars have tried to establish this with the help of morbidity, mortality and health statistics of these groups. The low health status of the tribes is closely linked with factors, such as poverty, illiteracy, use of contaminated drinking water, poor medical facilities in tribal areas, and many socio-cultural factors prevalent in their societies.

Let us now understand the meaning of the concept, malnutrition. It is defined by Jelliffe (1966) as a pathological state resulting from a relative or absolute deficiency or excess of one or more essential nutrients, this state being clinically manifested or detected only by biochemical, anthropometric or physiological tests.

The clinical examination of a person can help detecting the state of malnutrition. If there are changes in the superficial epithelial tissues, specially the skin, eyes, hair, or in organs near the surface of the body, such as the parotids and the thyroid glands, these changes could be attributed to inadequate nutritional intake by the person.

Anthropometry or measurement of human body is one of the important parameters in the assessment of protein energy malnutrition or PEM. Anthropometric methods used for measuring nutritional deficiency include weight for age, height for age, weight for height, weight/height ratio, body-mass index (BMI), head circumference, chest circumference, calf circumference, skin-fold thickness, etc. Body weight and height reflect the nutritional status of an individual, particularly among the children. All malnourished children show reduced growth and muscle protein deficiency. Marasmus and Kwashiorkor are two types of protein energy malnutrition found among the children, and children also show a mixed clinical picture of both types.

4.4.2 Incidence of Malnutrition among the Tribes

Inadequate nutritional status or malnutrition is manifested in various forms. For example, many of the tribal groups suffer from different grades of anaemia or deficiency of Red Blood Cells (RBC) in blood (as per World Health Organization classification) due to malnutrition. This is an important clinical manifestation. Anaemia Birhor, Baiga, Paudi Bhuyian Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) of Madhya Pradesh and Orissa.

Micronutrient deficiencies, such as Vitamin A, iron and iodine are also common among the tribal populations of India. Vitamin A deficiency is manifested in the forms of Bitot's spot, conjunctival xerosis and night blindness, which are quite common among the Bondo, Didayi, Juang and Kondh tribes of Orissa. Angular stomatitis (inflammation of the mucous membrane of the mouth) is also a result of micronutrient deficiency commonly found in tribal India. Iodine deficiency causes goiter, which is most common among the tribes who inhabit higher altitudes. Many studies have revealed that goiter is more prevalent among the females than the males.

Nutritional deficiency is manifested clinically in the forms of marasmus and kwashiorkor, about which we have hinted earlier. Marasmus occurs among the children aged under one year when maternal milk supply is interrupted by death or illness of the mother. Among older children this may happen at the time of severe famine. Marasmus causes loss of muscles and subcutaneous fat. The skin becomes dry and wrinkled. The hair becomes thin and dry. The body temperature remains low. Such children are susceptible to diarrheal and respiratory infections. On the other hand, children with kwashiorkor are usually aged 18 months to 4 years. In this case, muscle loss occurs, but subcutaneous fat is preserved. The hair becomes dry, straight and depigmented. The skin becomes scaly and glistening, peeling and hyperpigmented, especially on the legs. The abdomen of the child becomes distended and the liver enlarged.

Malnutrition is still abundant in tribal areas despite some efforts by the Government. Integrated Child Development Service Programme (ICDS), Special Nutrition Programme (SNP), Balwadi Nutrition Programme, CARE Assisted Nutrition Programmes, UNICEF Assistance for Women and Children, etc. have been implemented to overcome the problem of malnutrition in our country. However, there is a dire need to improve the living standard of the tribal people to overcome the problem of malnutrition and reduce the incidence of related diseases. The literacy level among them also needs to be improved, as ignorance and superstition lead to unhygienic living conditions and unhealthy practices. Regular monitoring by nutritionists and doctors is a must in the tribal areas, particularly the mothers and children, with regard to nutritional deficiencies. Health care must be provided at the door steps of the tribes, so that they develop trust in modern medicine and heed to the advice of the nutritionists and doctors to get rid of malnutrition.

Check Your Progress – I

1. Discuss the concept of ageing in the tribal societies of India and the problems the tribal aged face today.
2. What are the major reasons for illiteracy among the tribal children?
3. What is malnutrition? How does malnutrition manifest clinically among the tribes of India?

4.5 Alcoholism and Drug Abuse

4.5.1 Introduction

Alcoholism among the tribes of India is not only a health hazard, but also a social problem today. However, very few scientific and systematic studies have been undertaken on the problems of alcoholism and drug abuse among the tribes of India. This is because of the fact that anthropological studies on religion invariably make a reference to the use of alcohol by the tribes of India as a ritual practice. On all ritual occasions and life-cycle rituals, tribes in India consume alcohol irrespective of age and sex.

Tribes in Central India prepare rice beer by fermented rice, which is the principal source of intoxication. Many tribal people equate it with the morning 'tea' of the urban people. Sometimes, liquor is also prepared from fermented mohua (*Madhuca indica*) flowers or from the sap of palm trees. Because locally brewed alcohol is inexpensive and is a cultural symbol, tribal children get addicted to it right from their childhood. This general acceptability to the use of alcohol as a ritually sanctioned and culturally approved drink among the tribes has been the womb of many social evils.

In recent times, consumption of traditionally brewed alcohol is supplemented by drugs like heroin, morphine, opium, cannabis, psychotropic substances and others, which are mostly used by the tribal youth.

4.5.2 Alcohol and Drug Abuse in Arunachal Pradesh

An interesting study has come to our notice, which deals with the use of alcohols and drugs in Arunachal Pradesh. The authors say that an epidemiological study on substance use was carried out to assess the prevalence and pattern of tobacco, alcohol, and opium being used commonly in ethnographic diverse population of Arunachal Pradesh. The abstract of the paper indicates that a representative sample of 5135 people aged above 10 years were interviewed to collect information about their habit of substance use. Over all, prevalence of substance use was 30.9% tobacco (22.8% chewers and 12.1% smokers), 30% alcohol, and 4.8% opium, which vary across location, gender, race, age, education, and occupation. Though tobacco and alcohol was commonly used among all the tribes, but high alcohol use among Tangsa and Tutsa tribes reflects strong cultural belief. Religiously, opium use was low among the Christian and Hindu at lower (less than 1000 meters) altitude, but high among the Buddhist, indigenous people, and the Hindus living at higher altitudes. Among males, high multivariate rate ratio of opium users was seen among the population of high altitude. Moreover, it was also high among the Singpho and the Khamti tribes living in low altitude area, which shows the strong geo-ethnographic influence. Average age at initiation of alcohol use (12.4 years) was significantly lower than tobacco (17.6 years), and opium (23.3 years) indicate social acceptability of alcohol drinking at early age. Use of multiple substances and high prevalence of opium express the alarming situation of substance misuse in the region. This is the result of socio-cultural and ethnic influences, which calls for an integrated approach to break the traditional beliefs associated with alcohol and drug abuse in the tribal societies of Arunachal Pradesh (Chaturvedi and Mahanta 2004).

4.5.3 Self-Help Groups (SHGs) Against Alcohols and Drugs

While alcoholism and drug addiction is fairly common among the tribes of India, The Daily Statesman (July 4, 2006) reports that in the northeastern state of Manipur, tribal women have spearheaded a unique initiative to check the spread of drug abuse, a social malaise that has today assumed alarming epidemic proportions in that State. Calling themselves 'Meira Paibis' (literally, women's federation), groups of old women began by patrolling the valley areas, armed with torches and iron gongs to ward off crimes. Subsequently, they augmented their nightlong vigils to include alcohol and drug addiction as well. They imposed fines of Rs 150 and tied empty liquor bottles to necks of men found drinking in public and Rs 5,000 on sellers of alcohol. In areas patrolled by the Meira Paibis, drug use patterns changed substantially, with decline in riotous behaviour and greater safety for women at night. The Meira Paibis initiative is showcased in a new report on 'Drug Use in the Northeastern States of India' brought out jointly by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Indian government's Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. In fact, some of the path-breaking initiatives to reduce the burden of drug use in the family have actually been achieved through self-help groups (SHG) in the North-east, some of them spearheaded by women, the report adds.

Similar efforts are necessary all over India to contain the use of alcohols and drugs, which breaks human health and human families in no time. Since injecting drug use these days is the leading cause of HIV, which has assumed the status of a generalized epidemic, both the Government and NGO efforts should be directed towards redressal of the problems of alcoholism and drug abuse among the tribal population of India.

4.6 Problems of Child Labour

According to a recent estimate of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), more than 120 million children between the ages of 5-14 are employed as full time labourers around the world. A good number of such children labour is in the most hazardous and dangerous industries. In India itself, it is estimated that there are at least 44 million child labourers in the age group of 5-14. More than 80% of child labourers in India are employed in the agricultural and non-formal sectors and many are bonded labourers. Most of them are either illiterate or dropped out of school after two or three years.

4.6.1 What is Child Labour?

There is always confusion between child labour and child work. But child labour is not child work. Child work can be beneficial and can enhance a child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development without interfering with schooling, recreation and rest. Helping parents in their household activities and business after school in their free time also contributes positively to the development of the child. When such work is truly part of the socialization process and a means of transmitting skills from parents to child, it is not child labour. Through such work children can increase their status as family members and citizens and gain confidence and self-esteem.

Child labour, however, is the opposite of child work. Child labour hampers the normal physical, intellectual, emotional and moral development of a child. Children who are in the growing process can permanently distort or disable their bodies when they carry heavy loads or are forced to adopt unnatural positions at work for long hours. Children are less resistant to diseases and suffer more readily from chemical hazards and radiation than adults. UNICEF classifies the hazards of child labour into three categories, namely (i) physical; (ii) cognitive; (iii) emotional, social and moral.

4.6.2 Hazards and Magnitude of Child Labour in India

Many children engaged in mines and quarries, construction sites, brass and glassware industries, etc. face the problem of physical hazards. Working at these places affects the visual and auditory capacities of the children. Hard physical labour by a child for a year in such industries stunts its physical stature up to 30% of its normal biological potential. Working in an early age also affects the cognitive ability of a child, which includes literacy, numerical ability and acquisition of knowledge necessary for a normal living. The emotional and social hazards are experienced by the child domestic helps. They are made to work for long hours devoid of required leisure and recreation times. They are often abused by the employers, which has an adverse impact on the emotion of the child. Sometimes, children are engaged in immoral activities, such as drug trafficking, sex trade, and production of pornographic materials, etc. All these hazards affect their normal physical growth as well as healthy cognitive development.

Researchers give a range of incidence of child labour in India from about 14 million to about 100 million. Some studies show every fourth child in the age group of 5-15 is employed. The figures released by the non-governmental agencies are much higher than those of the State. UNICEF cites figures from various resources that put child labour in India at between 75 and 90 million. For some observers, the exact number of child labourers in India could be as high as 150 million. In brief, India is the largest producer of child labour and illiteracy on this earth. According to at least one study, a quarter of the world's total number of child labourers are in India and every third household in that country has a child at work.

Children in India are employed in almost all the activities of the non-formal sector. However, most of them are employed in the agricultural sector or in jobs closely related to agriculture, as is the pattern in many developing countries. A unique factor in India is that a significant number of these children are bonded labourers.

Thousands of children today are employed in the match industry in Sivakasi, Tamilnadu; diamond polishing industry in Surat, Gujarat; precious stone polishing industry in Jaipur, Rajasthan; glass industry in Ferozabad, Uttar Pradesh; brassware industry in Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh; handmade carpet industry in Mirzapur-Bhadohi in Uttar Pradesh and in Jammu-Kashmir; lock-making industry in Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh; slate industry in Mandsaur in Madhya Pradesh and Markapur in Andhra Pradesh; etc., besides working in hotels and restaurants, auto garages, etc. in cities. They suffer from respiratory disorders, skin diseases and other ailments for working in these hazardous places.

4.6.3 Child Labour among the Tribes

Tribal children are mostly engaged as bonded labourers or agricultural labourers unlike their counterparts in urban areas, who work in hazardous industries. Poverty is the root cause of incidence of child labour in tribal areas. While bonded labour is for life, agricultural labour may be on annual, seasonal or daily basis. If there is a presence of caste Hindu agricultural communities in the vicinity of the tribal habitats, tribal children are engaged by the agricultural castes as labourers either for domestic work or for farming, grazing and allied works. Of course, the Government of India has implemented the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 and the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 to protect the children from working at a tender age.

4.7 Trafficking and the Tribes in India

4.7.1 What is Trafficking?

Trafficking of humans involves moving men, women, and children from one place to another and placing them in conditions of forced labour. The practice includes forced sex work, domestic servitude, unsafe agricultural labour, sweatshop labour, construction or restaurant work, and various forms of modern-day slavery. This global violation of human rights occurs within countries and across borders, regions, and continents. Trafficking has been defined by the UN General Assembly statement of 1994 as: "The illicit and clandestine movements of persons

across national borders, largely from developing countries and some countries with economies in transition, with the end goal of forcing women and girl children into sexually or economically oppressive and exploitative situations for profit of recruiters, traffickers, and crime syndicates as well as other illegal activities related to trafficking, such as forced domestic labour, false marriages, clandestine employment and false adoption." The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, 2000, defines trafficking as: "The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of a threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or of giving or receiving payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation." Therefore, trafficking involves coercion to some degree for using the helpless humans for the advantage of the mafias.

4.7.2 Trafficking in India and its Impact

Trafficking is by and large a gendered phenomenon. Although trafficking of men and young boys is also taking place within and from the region, evidence from major Government and the NGO sources indicates that trafficking in India, both trans-border and in-country, happens for the purpose of commercial sex work, and over 60 percent of those trafficked into sex work are adolescent girls in the age-group of 12-16 years. In Mumbai and other Indian cities, girl children as young as eight or nine years of age are sold at auctions to brothels and are engaged in sex trade.

Trafficked people often suffer from a multitude of physical and psychological health problems. Women are specifically vulnerable to reproductive and other gender-specific health problems in trafficking situations as constant rapes, forced abortions and contraceptive use, lack of regular mammograms and Pap smears, and other health issues. Women in domestic servitude are subject to rape and other physical abuse, while women in forced sex work suffer increased risk of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS.

Traditionally, trafficking was unknown in tribal societies, although the status of women was not very high. But when the tribal areas were made open to forest contractors and non-tribal workers in forests during the British times, tribal women were easy prey to sexual exploitation almost instantly. Permissive tribal societies facilitated this kind of exploitation. With an assurance of marriage, there was sexual abuse of tribal women, and abandoning them later on. That was the beginning of severe sexually transmitted diseases of which the tribal girls and women were victims. In recent times, the pace of urbanization, industrialization and subsequent migration of tribal women to towns and cities have resulted in some kind of trafficking. While working in industries, construction sites and other sectors, tribal women are subjected to sexual and other kind of exploitation. Many of them are victims of HIV/AIDS also.

According to the Indian Center for Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, more than 40,000 tribal women, mainly from Orissa and Bihar, were forced into economic and sexual exploitation; many came from tribes driven off their land by national park plans. A Haryana-based NGO revealed widespread trafficking of teenaged girls and young boys from poverty-stricken Assam to wealthier Haryana and Punjab for sexual slavery under the pretext of entering into arranged marriages or for forced labor. There was also significant trafficking for real marriages due to decades of large-scale and increasing female feticide. The activists of IMPULSE network, an NGO working from Shillong, has claimed that gullible good-looking girls from the Northeast India are being forced into prostitution in the metropolises after being lured by organized pimps promising them glamorous careers and lucrative jobs.

Check Your Progress – II

1. Discuss how alcoholism and drug abuse has emerged as a social evil in tribal societies and how the women's self-help groups in Northeast India are countering this trend.
2. Present an assessment of hazards and magnitude of child labour in India.
3. What do you mean by trafficking? How do the trafficking rackets affect tribal women?

4.8 HIV/AIDS and the Indian Tribes

4.8.1 What is HIV/AIDS?

In its expanded form HIV means Human Immune Deficiency Virus and AIDS means Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. Perhaps no other disease today is as much discussed as AIDS, as it has assumed the position of a dreaded epidemic. In 2003, nearly 5 million people contracted the HIV in India that causes AIDS. While in the India has the second highest number of people living with HIV/AIDS in the world after South Africa. While in the West, AIDS is labeled as 'gay disease', or 'injected drug users' disease' or 'haemophilic' or 'blood transfusion disease', in India, it is primarily perceived as the 'sex workers' disease'. All the above factors, such as gay sex, injected (intravenous) drug use, blood transfusion and sexual intercourse with a diseased person are responsible for the spread of the disease.

It may be recalled that the first six cases of AIDS in India was found among the sex workers of Madras (now Chennai) in the year 1986, although it was first reported in 1981 in San Francisco and New York in the USA. There are two types of viruses that cause AIDS: HIV-1 and HIV-2. Both types are transmitted by sexual contact, through blood and from mother to child. It is also possible that a newborn can be infected through breast-feeding. It seems that HIV-2 is less easily transmitted and the period between the initial infection and manifestation of illness is longer in this case compared to HIV-1.

4.8.2 HIV/AIDS in India

Because of large number of Indian people suffering from AIDS, the country is facing one of the biggest public health challenges in its history. No State in India is left where this disease has not spread its virus. It is estimated that the brothels in the city of Mumbai, which has over 15,000 sex workers, 70% of whom have tested HIV positive. HIV infection among the injected drug users was first detected in Manipur, which is also a major problem in many metropolitan cities. Younger people in the age group of 15-24 years constitute about 38% of those affected in India, according to USAID estimation in 2004. By the end of May 2005, the total number of AIDS cases reported in India was 1,09,349, out of which 31,982 were women.

Alongside the emergence of HIV/AIDS as a health problem, it has also become one of the biggest social problems in India. People suffering from AIDS are treated as untouchables in many rural societies due to ignorance and deep-rooted stigmas. Their life styles are considered to be sinful and perverted. Discrimination is also noticed in work places, schools and hospitals as a result of these stigmas.

4.8.3 HIV/AIDS and the Tribes in India

We know that due to illiteracy, lack of awareness and infrastructure, the tribal people in India are subjected to many health risks. Their condition of abject poverty, marginalization and inability to maintain a hygienic living standard make them susceptible to health hazards. Besides their economic and social vulnerabilities, they are always considered as one of the high-risk groups with regard to HIV infections, as their conception of sex and sexual behaviours are considered to be more liberal and permissive compared to the non-tribals, and one of the reasons for the spread of HIV is through indiscriminate sex. In the light of the recent discussions by Patnaik and Mehrotra (2005), we will briefly examine the sexual behaviours of the tribes of India and other factors that make them vulnerable to HIV/AIDS.

Pre-marital sex is not uncommon among the tribes of India, as the dormitories in these societies facilitate interaction between the unmarried boys and girls. It is but natural that they are attracted to each other, but the relationship may not end up with a marriage in all cases. Among the Tharu, Jaunsari, Bhotia, Raji, Bhoksa, etc. boys and girls enjoy considerable freedom in sexual matters and the elders do not interfere as long as these are within 'permissible limits'. The novice in these societies is generally initiated by older adolescents into sexual experimentations. *Rang-bang* of the Bhotia, *Gitiara* of the Munda and Ho, *Dhumkuria* of the Oraon, *Basaghar* among the Paraja, *Majang* of the Juang and *Ghotul* of the Muria are the dormitories where the tribal boys and girls are initiated to sex at an early age. Similarly, there are cases of adultery are not unknown, although post-marital affairs often lead to divorce and social criticism. In many tribal cultures, monetary compensation for extra-marital sex is permissible, which facilitates sex relationship with multiple partners. This is in addition to the prevailing marriage practice of polygyny and polyandry, which are not considered as abnormal among many tribes of India.

Besides these culturally accepted practices, migration of tribals from their original abodes to cities and towns in search of jobs, involuntary displacement due to development projects, conversion of their habitats into hubs of urban and industrial activities, etc. expose them to HIV/AIDS, where sexual exploitation of tribal women is rampant. Contractors, forest officials, truck drivers sexually abuse the tribal women and spread AIDS in these areas. Patnaik and Mehrotra (2005) note that the districts of Durg, Bhilai, Raipur, Rajnandgaon and Mahasamund, which were once tribal dominated and are now highly urbanized, record fast spread of HIV/AIDS. The tribal cultural practice of tattooing among the Santal, Munda, Korwa, Baiga, apparently for a religious purpose, is a source of the spread of HIV/AIDS, as the same needle is often used for tattooing many people.

4.9 Gender Inequality

4.9.1 The Concept of Gender

The term 'gender' refers to the social construction of female and male identity. It can be defined as more than biological differences between men and women. It includes the way in which those differences, real or perceived, have been valued, used and relied upon to classify men and women and to assign roles and expectations to them.

Gender is often confused with sex. However, sex generally refers to biology and anatomy. People are said to be of the male sex or the female sex, as determined by three sets of characteristics: external sex organs, internal sex organs, and secondary sexual development at puberty. By contrast, gender refers to a set of qualities and behaviors expected from a female or male by society. Gender roles are learned and can be affected by factors such as education or economics. They vary widely within and among cultures. While an individual's sex does not change, gender roles are socially determined and can evolve over time.

The attributes of gender, as we have seen, vary cross-culturally. An interesting example can be given in this context. When an anthropologist asked her Lohar informant in Udaipur, Rajasthan as to why his wife was about eight years older to him, the informant retorted: "What has her being older got to do with marriage?" The anthropologist realized that in the informant's cognition, there was no link between age of the spouse and marriage, where as in common Hindu social order, the age of the wife is expected to be generally less than that of her husband. Therefore, the conceptualization of gender and its attributes are culture-specific and hence, cross-culturally variable.

4.9.2 Gender Inequality in India

Gender inequality has a strong root with a prejudice against the female sex all over the world, including India. Nobel Laureate, Amartya Sen (2001), had once written, "The afflicted world in which we live is characterized by deeply unequal sharing of the burden of adversities between women and men. Gender inequality exists in most parts of the world, from Japan to Morocco, from Uzbekistan to the United States of America. However, inequality between women and men can take very many different forms. Indeed, gender inequality is not one homogeneous phenomenon, but a collection of disparate and interlinked problems". He has, in fact, described seven different types of gender inequality, which are: 1) mortality inequality with high rate of mortality for women; 2) natality inequality with parental preference for male children than female children; 3) basic facility inequality including restricted access to health, education, employment for women; 4) special opportunity inequality in the fields of higher education and professional training; 5) professional inequality in employment and promotion opportunities in work and occupation; 6) ownership inequality with regard to properties like homes and lands; and 7) household inequality, where women are supposed to work at home or if they work outside home, they need to combine both working at home and office. All these seven types of gender inequalities are very well applicable to the Indian society, where women are generally considered inferior or less capable than men. This discrimination is a cultural construction, which has been institutionalized in Indian society over centuries due to its inherent patriarchal nature.

4.9.3 Gender Inequality among the Tribes

Although discourses on the status of women in tribal societies are many and varied in anthropological literature, there is not much of critical examination of the gender relations. This is due to the common notion that women in tribal societies have a higher social status than their men, or at least have an equal status with their male counterparts. They are portrayed as powerful, courageous and independent, and their participation in the subsistence economy, choice of selecting partners, freedom to divorce and remarriage, prevalence of the institution of bride wealth, etc. are attributed to their higher social status.

But the tribal people have their own ways of suppressing women, which often involves violence. For example, women are subject many taboos, as they are considered to be ritually impure. At the same time, in the Kondh society of Orissa, a *bejuni* or a priestess is the human representative of the Goddess, while ordinary Kondh women are ritually segregated during the famous buffalo sacrifice ritual. Similarly, while the men have the right over land, the women have only users' right over land, although they are expected to contribute productively both in domestic and economic sectors. The case is also true for their rights over children. In the patriarchal Kondh society, children are often the children of the husband or his clan; the mother has only 'users' right over her husband's children (Mishra 2007).

In the case of Khamti women, Misra (1994) observes that although women contribute to the family income quite substantially, their status remains lower than the Khamti men. Khamti women are expected to simultaneously indulge themselves in child rearing, domestic chores, working in the farms and taking care of the domestic animals. They work for more hours than the Khamti men, who have relatively more time for leisure and recreation.

Domestic and community violence against women is also not uncommon among the tribes. Whether as *dain*, *tonhi*, or witches in some other form, there is an ongoing violence against women, as part of the process of establishing or strengthening forms of patriarchy. These are some of the culturally bound forms of oppression and violence.

4.10 Safe Drinking Water

In one of its studies, the World Health Organization has indicated that drinking water contaminated by human waste causes 80% of the diseases in India. Communities belonging to tribal and semi-tribal areas in India still follow the unhygienic practice of relieving themselves in the open, near the sources of water, causing drinking water contamination by human waste. As per details released by the UNICEF, one gram of human excreta can contain 10,000,000 viruses, 1,000,000 bacteria, 1,000 parasite cysts and 100 parasite eggs. Protecting drinking water from faecal contamination by following home hygiene practices such as sanitary use of toilets and washing hands with soap or ash are the only means to fight the widespread menace of waterborne diseases.

Unfortunately, the tribal regions in India have neither sources of safe drinking water nor adequate awareness to keep the drinking water free from contaminations. Tribes in India still depend on natural springs, rivulets, stagnant rain water in small ponds, and rarely tube wells as their sources of drinking water. Invariably these sources contain contaminated water or water with dangerous minerals that the tribals use for drinking purpose. Using this water for drinking purpose, therefore, results in many water borne diseases like jaundice, diarrhea, gastro-enteritis, etc.

The National Water Policy, 2002 of India has categorically made provisions for the supply of safe drinking water in all the rural and urban areas of the country. Many NGOs working with the tribal people have also been extending necessary help by installing tube wells, restoring community ponds for water storage, etc. Still de-rural pockets, let alone the tribal pockets with undulated hilly and mountainous terrains.

4.11 Reproductive Health among the Tribes of India

4.11.1 What is Reproductive Health?

Within the framework of WHO's definition of health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, reproductive health addresses the reproductive processes, functions and system at all stages of life. Reproductive health, therefore, implies that people are able to have a responsible, satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so. Implicit in this are the right of men and women to be informed of and to have access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of fertility regulation of their choice, and the right of access to appropriate health care services that will enable women to go safely through pregnancy and childbirth and provide couples with the best chance of having a healthy infant.

4.11.2 Reproductive Health in Tribal India

Studies on fertility and mortality trends among the tribal population of India have been found to be fragmentary and isolated. Limited studies are available on infant mortality and hardly any study is available on maternal mortality among the tribal population. However, out of a few case studies are available so far, we will assess the situation in Northeast India. S.K. Basu of the National Institute of Health and Family Welfare, New Delhi has made some of the important observations on health status of tribal women of India, which are presented below.

On the basis of the census data, Gogoi (1990) found that during 1961-71, the rate of growth of tribal population in North-East India was lower than that of the general population. This was

mainly because of a very low natural growth rate of the tribal population in the region. Pandey (1990) observed high fertility and mortality in Mishmi tribal groups and attributed it to the low level of education and income, lack of knowledge of family planning method and importance of small family size, poor medical facilities, lack of proper sanitation and drinking water. Barua (1982) studied 196 ever-pregnant women belonging to the Hajong tribe of West Garo hills district of Meghalaya. High infant mortality (18.2%) and prenatal mortality (3.1%) were reported among them. Das et al. (1982) studied two Lepcha villages of northern Sikkim, namely Lachen and Lachung, and found the total fertility rate for Lachung and Lachen to be 4.66 and 3.79 respectively. The results on total fertility rate were more or less similar to the Indian national population. Differences between the two were possibly due to the socio-cultural factors. The number of surviving children per women in Lachung and Lachen were found to be 3.70 and 2.65 respectively. The net reproductive index was observed to be 3.6 in Lachung and 1.80 in Lachen.

Maternal mortality was reported to be high among various tribal groups but no exact data could be collected. The main causes of maternal mortality were found to be unhygienic and primitive practices of parturition. For example, it was observed that among the Kutia Kondhs (Basu et al. 1990), the delivery was conducted by the mother herself in a half squatting position holding a rope tied down from the roof of the hut. This helped her in applying pressure to deliver the child. In complicated labour, obviously it might lead to maternal as well as child mortality. Similar crude births practices were found to exist in other tribal groups like the Kharias, Gonds, Santals, etc. It is fairly common among the tribes of Northeast India to escape into the forest alone, when the labour starts, and to give birth to the baby in the forest itself. Since no help is expected at the time of delivery, maternal mortality rate is naturally higher among them.

Maternal and child health care practices are found to be largely neglected in various tribal group (i.e. Baster tribal groups, Kutia Kondhs of Orissa, Santals, Jaunsaris, Kharias, etc.). Expectant mothers to a large extent are not inoculated against tetanus. From the inception of pregnancy to its termination, no specific nutritious diet is consumed by the women. On the other hand, some pregnant tribal women (i.e. Dudh Kharias, Santals, etc.) reduce their food intake because of the fear of recurrent vomiting and also to ensure that the baby remains small in the womb and the delivery becomes easier. The consumption of iron, calcium and vitamins during pregnancy is poor. The habit of taking alcohol during pregnancy is found to be common among the tribal women and almost all of them continue their regular activities including hard labour even during advanced pregnancy. More than 90% of the deliveries are conducted at home attended by elderly ladies of the household. No specific precautions are observed at the time of conducting deliveries which result in an increased susceptibility to various infections. Services of paramedical staff are secured only in difficult labour cases.

Maternal mortality directly related to pregnancy and childbirth was found to be appreciably high among the tribal population groups of Bastar district. In addition, a lot of females suffered from ill health due to pregnancy and child-birth in the absence of a well defined concept of health consciousness. As far as child-care is concerned, both rural and tribal illiterate mothers are observed to breastfeed their babies. But, most of them adopted harmful practices like discarding of colostrums, giving prelatic feeds, delayed introduction of breast feeding and delayed introduction of complementary feeds. Vaccination and immunization of infants and children are inadequate among tribal groups. In addition, extreme magico-religious beliefs and taboos aggravate the problems.

It is commonly observed that the tribal women give more attention to child welfare and child development programmes rather than mother care or family planning programmes. This may be because of their inherent maternal instinct and protectiveness towards their children. They contacted doctors more for antenatal care than postnatal care because of their concern with the welfare of the foetus in the womb and preparing for a safe labour. One of the studies shows that more than 90% of the eligible couples of Jaunsaris and Santals are found to be aware of family planning methods whereas only 16% Dudh Kharia couples are aware of family planning methods.

R.K.Kar (1993) in one of his studies on the reproductive health of the Nocte of Arunachal Pradesh has made the following observations. He says, "Reproductive health behavior of the Nocte women is intimately related to their value system and cultural tradition. Cultural values and practices have a deep influence on health behavior in general and reproductive health in particular. Thus, it does not seem to be possible to raise the health status and quality of life of the people unless such efforts are integrated with the wider effort to bring about an overall transformation of the society as a whole.

"It is also apparent that the health development programs need to be integrated conveniently with the larger program of overall development in such a way that the two become mutually self-supporting. This would be possible only when a number of supportive services, such as development of transport and communication, nutrition and education, etc. are contemplated simultaneously. On the whole good health and good society go together".

All the above observations clearly indicate the deplorable status of reproductive health in tribal India, despite constant efforts by the Government of India, various State Governments and NGOs working among the tribes of India.

Check Your Progress – III

1. What is HIV/AIDS and discuss how it has become an epidemic among the tribes of India?
2. Define gender and discuss about gender inequality in tribal societies with suitable examples.
3. What are the normal sources of drinking water for the tribes of India? Delineate the problem of safe drinking water in tribal societies of India.
4. What do you mean by reproductive health? Discuss about the reproductive health status of tribal women in India.

4.12 Let Us Sum Up

Let us understand and appreciate that we have already crossed 59 years of Indian Independence and yet, our tribal societies still live a deplorable and marginalized life. Problems grapple them from all sides. They still lack basic facilities of life, such as food, education, health and sanitation, etc. Contrarily, they are still the victims of child labour, HIV/AIDS, malnutrition, immoral trafficking, alcoholism and drug abuse, gender inequality, high maternal and child mortality, etc. We have discussed some of these problems, their incidence and magnitude in this Unit.

4.13 Key Words

Social Gerontology:	The study of statuses and roles of older persons, their culture patterns, social organization and collective behaviour, as they are affected by social changes.
Anthropometry:	The science of measurement of human body parts.
Malnutrition:	A pathological state resulting from a relative or absolute deficiency or excess of one or more essential nutrients in human diet.
Self-help Group (SHG):	A voluntary organization formed mostly by women to under developmental and/or reformistic works in the society.
Child Labour:	Labour of children below the age of 14 years that hampers their normal physical, intellectual, emotional and moral development.
Trafficking:	Trafficking means moving men, women, and children from one place to another and placing them in condition of forced labour.
HIV:	HIV means Human Immune Deficiency Virus that weakens the immune system in humans and causes AIDS or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.
Gender:	It refers to the social construction of female and male identity and includes the ways in which differences between men and women are valued, used and relied upon to classify and assign roles and expectations to them.
Reproductive Health:	It addresses the reproductive processes, functions and system at all stages of human life and therefore, implies that people are able to have a responsible, satisfying and safe sex life.

4.14 Check Your Learning

1. Present an overview of the social problems faced by the tribes of India.
2. Discuss the concept of age in tribal societies and the problems they face in changing circumstances.
3. What are the main reasons for school dropout among the tribal children? How to prevent this?
4. What is malnutrition? How is it manifested among the tribal children of India?
5. Explain how alcoholism and drug abuse has become pandemic among the tribal youth of India. How do the tribal women help preventing drug abuse in Northeast India?
6. Discuss the magnitude of child labour in India and health hazards associated with it.
7. What do you understand by trafficking? How does it affect the tribal women in India?
8. Discuss how some of the traditional sexual behaviours promote HIV/AIDS among the tribes of India.
9. Attempt a brief essay on the nature of gender inequality among the tribal societies of India.
10. How safe drinking water is a health problem in India? Discuss with suitable examples.
11. What is meant by reproductive health? Attempt a brief essay on the state of reproductive health among the tribal population of India.

4.15 Suggested Readings

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4.16 Hints/Answers to Questions in Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress - I

1. Discuss how ageing is both a physical and a socio-cultural phenomenon in tribal societies with examples of age-grade and age-set systems. Also discuss the social and psychological problems they face.

2. Discuss the economic, cultural and infrastructural impediments that result in low literacy rate among the tribes.
3. Define malnutrition as given in the Unit. Discuss how it is manifested through various diseases and body deformities.

Check Your Progress - II

1. Discuss both traditional and modern practices of alcohol and drug abuse in tribal societies. Delineate the role of 'Meira Paibis' in Manipur in combating drug addiction.
2. Discuss approximate number of child labour and various industries where they are employed.
3. Define trafficking. Discuss how sex rackets work and how tribal women are exploited economically and sexually.

Check Your Progress - III

1. Explain HIV/AIDS. Discuss the traditional sexual behaviour patterns among the tribes that risk the tribal people as potential victims of HIV/AIDS.
2. Define gender as a social construct. Discuss the gender inequalities with examples to contradict the most popular notion that tribal women have a higher or at least an equal status as their men.
3. Discuss how contaminated water is often used by the tribes that leads to many water-borne diseases.
4. Define reproductive health. Discuss about maternal and infant mortality and other indicators. Also discuss how many cultural practices of the tribes make their women vulnerable to diseases and death.

Unit - V

Language Issues

5.0 Objectives

After going through this Unit, you should be able to:

- Comprehend the language situation in India, and especially the language situation among the tribes of India.
- Know the debate over the medium of instruction in Schools located in the tribal areas.
- Understand the issues relating to the preparation of scripts for tribal languages in India.
- Appreciate the issues relating to the preservation of tribal languages and problems associated with it.

5.1 Introduction

We all know that Indian Union is a multi-cultural and multi-lingual nation. When the State Reorganization Committee was constituted in post-Independence India to determine the political boundaries of States within the Union, language was taken as the basis for the reorganization of States. Nevertheless, most of the States are again inhabited by people speaking different languages and dialects, and hence, not even a single State is a monolingual administrative and political unit. Let us take the example of Arunachal Pradesh itself. It is a State of many languages and dialects as each tribe and sub-tribe has its own language or dialect, and many of these languages are mutually unintelligible.

The problem of language in education in India is a challenge to all of us. There are many tribes in India having their own languages. But their children often have to get education in other languages than their mother-tongue, as the tribal languages are not supported by writing systems or scripts. Even where there is a script to support, as in the case of either the Khamti or Sherdukpen or Santal, there is not much effort to write textbooks for school children, and not many trained teachers are available to teach the tribal children in their mother-tongue. Because of this, many languages are gradually getting obsolete and extinct. Once a language is lost, the binding force between its speakers also faces the threat of extinction, thus jeopardizing the survival of the whole culture. In fact, at present over 60% of tribal mother tongues are extinct, endangered or moribund. It is also true that barring a few, all the existing tribal languages are marginalized and their use has shrunk to the home and in-group communication domains only. Unfortunately, most of the tribal languages are neglected to such an extent that not more than 1% of the tribal children get their primary education in their mother tongue. This is nothing but a condition of 'linguistic genocide'.

Given the situation, the question now is that what could be done to preserve the tribal languages and what problems come on the way of preserving and promoting them. In this Unit, we shall discuss the issue of tribal scripts, the medium of instruction for the tribal children, and the preservation of tribal languages in Indian context.

5.2 Languages in India

5.2.1 Indian Languages and their Distribution

As we all know, India is a multi-lingual country. However, it is difficult to say exactly how many languages are spoken in this country. The British administrator-linguist, Grierson, was the first to undertake a systematic study of Indian languages and the result was an 11-volume compendium on 'Survey of Indian Languages'. In this survey, Grierson lists 179 languages and 544 dialects spoken in India. Relatively recently, Annamalai (2001) has stated that there are about 200 languages in India reducible from various dialects. Meanwhile, the Summer Institute of Linguistics

estimates that about 850 languages are in daily use in India, out of which 398 are listed in their Ethnologue (2003). However, the same database, Ethnologue, in its 2005 edition lists 428 languages for India, 415 of which are "living" (Gordon 2005). According to 1991 Census, there are 114 languages and 1,579 "mother tongues" (Census of India, 2001). Further, 1,579 mother tongues have been "rationalized" from a list of around 10,000 mother tongues, which was told by the surveyed population of India.

Of the 114 languages reported by the Census of India (2001), only 23 are recognized as 'official languages' or scheduled languages, and listed in the Constitution, while the rest 91 languages come under the category of non-scheduled languages.

Indian languages are derived from four major language families: (1) Indo-European, (2) Dravidian, (3) Austro-Asiatic, and (4) Tibeto-Burmese. But many languages spoken in India do not come under any one of the above mentioned established families, and hence, are named as 'language isolates'. Andamanese languages belong to the category of language isolates in this sense. The Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo-European language family is spoken by about 74% of the Indian population, followed by 24% speakers of the Dravidian family of languages. Rest of the Indian population speaks Austro-Asiatic and Tibeto-Burman languages.

While Indo-European languages are mainly spoken in large tracts of the northern, western and parts of eastern India, the speakers of Dravidian languages are limited to the southern and central Indian regions. Similarly, while the Tibeto-Burman speakers are largely confined to the eastern Himalayan region, the people of central, northeast India and in Andaman and Nicobar islands speak Austro-Asiatic languages. Austro-Asiatic language is divided into Mundari and Mon-Khmer branches, the former spoken by the tribes of Jharkhand and the latter spoken by the tribes of north-east India and Andaman and Nicobar islands. We shall discuss about them again under the section on tribal languages in India.

5.2.2 Tribal Languages in India

We know that Scheduled Tribes (STs) constitute about 8% of the total Indian population as per the Census of 2001 and their population is about 84 million. There are 573 notified or STs living in different parts of the country, speaking their own language or dialect. These languages are different from the State languages in which they live. There are more than 270 such languages in India.

The tribal languages in India can be broadly classified into four main language families. These are: (1) Austro-Asiatic family, (2) Sino-Tibetan or Tibeto-Chinese family, (3) Dravidian family, and (4) Indo-European family.

The Austro-Asiatic language family is divided into two branches. The Mon-Khmer branch is represented by the speakers of Khasi language in Meghalaya and Nicobarese in the Nicobar Islands.

The Tibeto-Chinese family has two sub-families. The Siamese-Chinese sub-family is represented by the Tai group of languages that includes the Khamti of Lohit district in Arunachal Pradesh and the Phakial, etc. The Tibeto-Burman sub-family has as many as five branches, which are discussed below:

- i) Tibeto-Himalayan branch (Bhotia of Darjeeling);
- ii) Western subgroup of Pronominalized Himalayan group (Chamba, Lahauli, Swangli, Kinauri, etc.);

- iii) Non- Pronominalized Himalayan group (Rong or Lepcha, Toto, etc.);
- iv) Arunachal branch (Aka or Hrusso, Abor, Miri, Dafla, Mishmi, etc.);
- v) Assam-Burmese branch has four sub-divisions:
 - a) Bara or Bodo group (Plains Kachari, Dimasa or Hill Kachari, Garo, Tripuri, etc.);
 - b) Naga group (Anagami, Ao, Sema, Rengma, etc. of the Naga subgroup and Kachcha Naga, Kabui Naga of the Naga-Bodo subgroup);
 - c) Kachin group (Singpho); and
 - d) Kui-Chin group (Manipuri, Thado, Sokte, Ralte, Lushai, etc.).

The speakers of Dravidian family of languages are scattered over the southern part of India and include the speakers of Korwa, Yerukula, Yarava, Badaga, Todo, Kota, Oraon or Kurukh, Malto or Maler, Kui, etc.

Although there not many Indo-European speakers among the tribes of India, Hajong and Bhili languages belong to this family (Vidyarthi and Rai 1985).

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that Indian tribes speak many different languages and dialects. And yet, as we said earlier, linguistic genocide has engulfed the tribes of India. This is despite many constitutional safeguards specially made for the Scheduled Tribes (STs) of India. In the next section, we shall examine these provisions relating to tribal languages.

5.2.2.1 Constitutional Provisions for the STs with regard to Language

The Constitution of India defines the Scheduled Tribes or tribal communities or parts or Tribes for the purposes of the Constitution. Articles 15, 16 and 17 guarantee the rights to equality as the fundamental right. Moreover, under cultural and educational rights, Article 29 protects the interests of the minorities. The Article reads as follows:

1. Any section of the citizen residing in the territory or any part thereof having a distinct language, scripts or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.
 2. No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the state or receiving aid out of state funds on ground only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them.
- Having stated the right of the people to maintain their own language and culture, the Constitution adds the explicit protection of the rights of minorities to provide their own education in their own language, which is certainly an important part of language maintenance. Article 30 details this right, along with protection against discrimination, in receiving government grants for education:
1. All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

(A) In making any law providing for the compulsory acquisition of any property of any educational institution established and administered by a minority, referred to in clause 1, the State shall ensure that the amount fixed by or determined under such law for the acquisition of such property is such as would not restrict or abrogate the right guaranteed under that clause. The State shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language.

This final clause does not prevent the State from regulating the educational standards, but does protect against regulations concerning medium of instruction. This fact has also been upheld in the

courts (Dua 1986). The question has been raised as to how language rights fit into the language planning goals framework. While not explicitly related to language planning, these constitutional safeguards provide protection for language maintenance objectives. Giving languages the right to be and the right to be learned through protection of them seems also to be implicit forms of status planning. Besides these general safeguards, the Indian Constitution includes a section titled Special Directives in which language and education issues beyond simple protection for minorities are explicitly addressed. Article 350 guarantees the right of all people to use a language they understand in "representations for redress of grievances." In the Seventh Amendment to the Constitution made by the Constitution Act of 1956, two Articles were added addressing linguistic minority issues:

350A. Facilities for Instruction in Mother-tongue at Primary Stage.

It shall be the endeavour of every State and of every local authority within the State to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother-tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups; and the President may issue such directions to any State as he considers necessary or proper for securing the provision of such facilities.

350B. Special Officer for Linguistic Minorities.

- (1) There shall be a Special Officer for linguistic minorities to be appointed by the President.
- (2) It shall be the duty of the Special Officer to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided for linguistic minorities under this Constitution and report to the President upon those matters at such intervals as the President may direct, and the President shall cause all such reports to be laid before each House of Parliament, and sent to the Governments of the States concerned.

To ensure protection under the Constitution, being defined as a minority becomes an important issue tied to the complexity of defining language and mother tongue. The issue of listing tribes and castes for special protection occurs elsewhere in the Constitution, providing the categories of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, not to be confused with the list of official languages referred to as Scheduled Languages. While the definition of linguistic minorities was not included in the Constitution, a Supreme Court decision defined minority language as separate spoken language, not restricted to languages using or having a separate script (Dua 1986).

Further, Article 46, Part IV of Directive Principles of State policy deals with the issue of promotion of educational and economic interests of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other weaker sections. It reads, "The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and in particular of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation."

5.2.2.2 The National Policy of Education and the Tribes

The National Policy of Education was approved by the Indian Parliament in 1986. The policy gives special place to the education of the Scheduled Tribes. Besides the general policy enunciating measures and directives for the rejuvenation of education in general, it states some special measures for the education of the Scheduled Tribes.

In its Para 4.6, the policy states that the following measures will be taken urgently to bring the Scheduled Tribes (STs) on par with others:

1. Priority will be accorded to opening Primary Schools in tribal areas.

II. The socio-cultural milieu of the STs has its distinctive characteristics including in many cases their own spoken language. This underlines the need to develop the curricula and devise instructional materials in tribal languages at the initial stages with arrangements for switching over to the regional language.

III. Educated and promising Scheduled Tribe youth will be encouraged and trained to take up teaching in tribal areas.

IV. Residential Schools, including Ashram Schools, will be established in large scale.

V. Incentive schemes will be formulated for the Scheduled Tribes, keeping in view their special needs and life styles. Scholarships for higher education will emphasize technical, professional and para-professional courses. Special remedial courses and other programmes to remove psycho-social impediments will be provided to improve their performance in various courses.

VI. Anganwadis, non-formal adult education centres, will be opened on a priority basis in areas predominantly inhabited by the Scheduled Tribes.

The NPE of 1986 and the Programme of Action (POA) of 1992 recognize the heterogeneity and diversity of tribal areas while underlining the importance of instruction through the mother tongue and the need for preparing teaching/learning materials in tribal languages. A working group on Elementary and Adult Education for the X Five Year Plan (2002-07) clearly emphasized the need to improve the quality of education of tribal children and to ensure equity as well as further improving the access to education.

The policy has very explicitly stated that there is a need to develop curriculum and instructional materials in tribal languages at the initial stages. The distinctive characteristics of the Scheduled Tribes will be the basis for the development of such materials. This definitely endorses the need for making education relevant to the community. Cultural orientation of the curriculum has been a long felt need (Ambasht 1971, 2001).

The foregoing discussions very clearly state various provisions in the Constitution as well as in the National Policy on Education to grant 'right to language' to every citizen of the country. The STs are further protected to preserve and promote their languages, as it becomes special responsibility of the State. The ground reality, however, is different. Out of 23 scheduled languages, only 2 tribal languages (Bodo and Santhali) are recognized, while other tribal languages face the threat of extinction.

Check Your Progress - I

1. Discuss the linguistic distribution among the tribes of India.
2. What are the constitutional provisions for the protection and preservation of the languages of the STs and minorities?
3. Discuss the mandates of the National Policy of Education for the promotion of tribal education and tribal languages in India.

5.3 Issues related to Learning through Mother Tongue

5.3.1 Introduction

The Indian Education Policy states that every child has the right to learn in his/her mother tongue, but as we see, education is conducted only in the major state languages. For example, in

the tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh, the tribal children start their schooling in Telugu, the language of the State. Similarly, in Jharkhand or Chhatisgarh, the tribal child learns through Hindi from the beginning of his/her schooling career.

It is evident, therefore, that tribal languages are not used in schools and tribal children, who are not familiar with the language of instruction, are at a disadvantage from the start of their educational career. Besides this, the state curriculum bears very little relationship to the tribal child's culture or to his/her previous knowledge and understanding. Children are not only learning in a language they do not know, they are also attempting to learn concepts, which have no familiar foundation in that language. Teachers rarely speak the language of the tribe and few appreciate the children's traditional culture. They have had no training in teaching 'second language learners' and so the children are taught as first language speakers. Many teachers are unwilling to live in the tribal communities. Many tribal communities see their language as a hindrance to improving economic conditions and accessing better facilities. Sometimes the children conceal their tribal origins as tribal culture and language is often regarded as inferior.

5.3.2 Medium of Instruction in Primary Schools

Many researches highlight the importance of teaching through mother tongue at the primary school stage. Some of the important findings of such studies are presented below:

- 1) A child learns best from a familiar starting point;
- 2) Learning to read in the mother tongue is easier than learning to read in an unfamiliar language;
- 3) Academic concepts are best learned in the mother tongue;
- 4) Second language learning is more successful if founded on solid first language ground;
- 5) Reading and writing skills as well as new concepts can be transferred from one language to another.

In India, therefore, the post-independent education policy promotes forcing minority language education into majority language education programmes, which has many far reaching consequences. Since most of the tribal languages have not been officially recognized and a very few of them have been scripted, these languages lack written literature of any kind and curricula have rarely been developed. These are not used in official capacity including education. Even so, the Constitution of India and the India Education Policy state that every child has the right to learn in his/her mother tongue. The National Curriculum Framework for School Education 2000 states that "the medium of instruction ideally, ought to be the mother tongue at all the stages of school education. In the case of the learners whose mother tongue and the regional languages are different, the regional language may be adopted as the medium of instruction from the third standard".

5.3.3 Problems of Learning in an Alien Language

Because of these and other reasons the drop out rate among the tribal children is very high - over 80% in the first year of primary school in some areas. While this is due to a combination of other socio-economic factors, the language and culture of the curriculum and the lack of support given by and to teachers in these schools are contributory factors. Therefore, tribal languages and cultures, and thus the tribal children's identities, are being marginalized and ignored by the current education system.

According to the Census of 2001 the rate of literacy among the tribes is 38.4%, against a national average of over 60%. The school dropout rate among the tribal children is very high, as we stated earlier. Considering the adverse conditions of education for these children, these children do not actually drop out; rather they are 'pushed out'. It is estimated that 25% of all primary school children belonging to different linguistic groups, whose language is not the medium of school instruction, face "moderate to severe learning disadvantage" (Jhingran 2005). In any case, the high attrition from formal education results in a disproportionately low representation of tribal students in higher education.

What concerns us here is that despite several recommendations made by the linguists and anthropologists, and distinct and specific constitutional provisions, teaching and learning in mother tongue for a tribal child has remained a distant dream. This does not only create problems for a tribal child to learn and conceptualize things, but most importantly culminates in developing a sense of defeatism and loss of interest in patronizing his/her language. For example, Furer-Haimendorf (1982) observes that in Orissa, many prayers and magical formulae are also spoken in Oriya by the Bonda tribe, as the Bondas think it proper that deities and spirits be addressed in a 'superior language'. The illiterate and economically backward tribes have no resources to assert their linguistic and cultural consciousness and therefore are subdued to change. As a result, language becomes a political tool for social division. Pattanayak has aptly reported that "Use of language can become a major factor in creating unequal societies in multilingual contexts. As long as this inequality persists education cannot be conflict free" (1990).

5.3.4 Experiments in Teaching through Mother Tongue

Some States in India with tribal population, however, have taken up the task of teaching through mother tongue to the tribal children at the primary school stage. We will see some of these experiments in the following paragraphs.

Assam was the first State in India to prepare teacher training modules and teaching learning materials for the Bodo tribal language way back in 1995. Bodo has been a medium of instruction in some districts of Assam at the primary stage. In Goalpara district, Garo medium workbooks have been translated/adopted and distributed in the schools.

Madhya Pradesh has also taken the initiative of preparing handbooks called Bridge Language Inventories (BLIs) in three tribal languages, such as, Gondi, Kuduk and Bhili. It has also translated the Class I textbook, Bharati, into tribal languages.

In Karnataka, a textbook for classes I and II has been translated into the Soliga tribal language. In Maharashtra, tribal language dictionaries have been developed for easy translation. The State of Kerala has also developed bilingual materials for the benefit of the tribal children.

Similar efforts of introducing mother tongue education in the primary schools have been taken up by the States of Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Bihar. In Orissa, books in OI Chikki districts were introduced in primary schools in late 1990s.

Besides the State Governments, efforts are also being made by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), Central Institute of Indian Languages, and Tribal Research Institutes towards the use of tribal languages in early education. The NCERT, through the National Curricular Framework, has suggested and implemented curricular and textbook reforms that have sought to incorporate minority cultures and values of multiculturalism into the classroom teaching.

Check Your Progress - II

1. Discuss the importance of learning through the mother tongue by a tribal child at the primary stage of education.
2. What are the problems of learning through an alien language at the primary level by a tribal child?
3. Discuss various initiatives taken by the State governments in teaching through the mother tongue to the tribal children at the primary stage.

5.4 The Issue of Scripts in Tribal Languages

5.4.1 Introduction

You might have realized by now that in spite of having so many tribal languages and dialects, why is it so that the language of the State is often used as the medium of instruction in tribal schools. One of the major problems in learning in mother tongue is the lack of textbooks, which is due again to lack of scripts for majority of the tribal languages in India. These are interconnected problems, about which we will discuss in this Section.

Closely related to the issue of tribal language education is the problem of scripts for these languages. The use of tribal language in education necessitates its development as an educational tool. The very first step in its development is to create a writing system. We know that there are a few scripts available among the tribes of India, out of which two tribal scripts are still preserved in Arunachal Pradesh. The Khanti and the Sherdukpen tribal communities have their traditional scripts and these are somewhat preserved as both these tribes profess Buddhism, and there is still a strong tradition among these tribes to write sacred texts and donate them to the monastery, which is considered as a merit-earning act. The introduction of photocopiers in these areas is certainly going to wipe out the rich tradition of writing texts, and thereby putting an end to the culturally embedded obligation of preserving the scripts.

In central India, Pandit Raghunath Murmu has created the 'OI-Chiki' script for the Santal and the cognate tribes, which is being used for writing textbooks and teaching in schools. Bodo in Assam, of course, has been accepted as a Scheduled Language and is being used in education. Experiments are being done on some other languages, such as the Gondi, Bhili, Soliga, Garo, etc., but with borrowed scripts either from the State language, or with the use of either Devanagari or Roman scripts. Therefore, the script situation is still unsatisfactory in tribal India.

5.4.2 Models for Development of Tribal Scripts

One major aspect of developing a writing system is the choice of a script. In the Indian context, the choice of the script may have four options: (a) the script of the official language of the State; (b) Devanagari as the script used for the National language, Hindi; (c) Roman as the script, in which Bible has been written, for many tribal Christians; and (d) an invented script like OI Chiki used by the tribes in Chhotanagpur, Orissa and West Bengal. However, each option has advantages and disadvantages from cultural, social, political, economic and technological points of view. In case a separate script is not possible to invent or it is too cumbersome, the generally favoured view in India is the use of the script of the State language with necessary modifications to suit the needs of the tribal languages (Annamalai 2001). This is because of the fact that the tribal children have automatic accessibility to the State language script through the signboards and other public writings available in their environment, which involves less strain for the neo-learners.

The second aspect of the writing system is devising alphabets - a set of symbols - to represent the meaning of differentiating sounds of the tribal language. Here also cultural and political considerations intervene with purely linguistic considerations.

The third aspect of the writing system is spelling of words, identification of word boundaries and punctuation marks. The last aspect is technological applications like printing, computer keyboard, etc.

Since a writing system is also a cultural symbol and an institution, its development must give credence to cultural, social and political considerations also. Let me illustrate this briefly. Bodos adapted the script used for Bengali and Assamese languages and Bodo literature was developed using this script. When political discontent brewed against the dominance of the Assamese people, the Assamese script was perceived as the script of domination, and there was violent agitation to replace it in favour of the Roman script. The Government of Assam was opposed to the change and at the intervention of the Central Government, Bodos were made to accept Devanagari script as a political solution.

Spelling can give rise to problems, as all members of the tribal community may not agree on how to spell the borrowed words from the dominant language. There are many such problems and often disagreement leads to non-use of the tribal language in education. It is, therefore, necessary to arrive at a consensus involving the community in its deliberations to take the first step for tribal education essential for tribal development (Annamalai 2001).

5.5 Loss and Preservation of Tribal Languages

5.5.1 Loss of Tribal Languages

It is an accepted fact that tribal languages in India are gradually dying over the years and the following factors are attributed to their loss or death:

1. Dialectization is the process of quick fragmentation of a tribal language into dialects and sub-dialects mainly due to the lack of writing systems in these languages. These languages are confined to spoken form, which is liable to quick changes, and even to permanent loss.
2. Language loss - Some of the tribal language are losing out to other dominant languages of the State or becoming diluted in the process of communication.
3. Language death - Many tribal languages are dead now due to non-maintenance, as these are neither used in education nor in administration.
4. Loss of dignity - Many tribal languages are dying because their speakers think that their languages are dead languages outside their region of habitation. Some think it dignified to speak in alien dominant languages and undignified to speak in their mother tongue.

5.5.2 How to Preserve Tribal Languages?

Certainly there is no short-cut formula to preserve the most vulnerable tribal languages, which are treated badly in the hands of both the State and its speakers. It needs consistent and sustainable efforts. However, the following suggestions can be made for the preservation of tribal languages in India.

An initiative for the preparation of scripts and writing of text books for primary education in the tribal areas is an urgent task before us. This is certainly an uphill task, but is not impossible.

What is needed is a coordinated effort by the linguists, anthropologists and the community members. The task should follow 4 stages: production of materials and curricula; printing of text books; training the teachers; and introduction of the books in the school. Probably this would balance the neglect to the tribal languages and scripts so far and can save them from forced extinction. This should be supplemented with invention of scripts, documentation of tribal lore and indigenous knowledge systems in tribal languages, preparation of dictionaries for all the tribal languages, etc. New planning must be made to make the tribals well versed in their native language (both orally and in written form), while enabling them at the same time to learn other languages, namely, Oriya, English and Hindi to be at par with the mainstream.

The international organizations like UNESCO and UNICEF have consistently argued that respect for the culture and identity of people is an important element in any viable approach to people centered development. World bodies such as the United Nations and the UNESCO are keen that all languages of the world are properly managed. And as follow-up of this objective, World Languages Reports are being written to describe linguistic diversity by studying its evolution, its current states, explain problems that affect different regions of the world and find solutions to linguistic communities in danger of extinction, keeping in view the fact that conflicts that occur in the world are always linked to questions of cultural and linguistic identity (Marti 2000).

The ratified Declarations of the Indigenous Peoples' Organizations states that "the culture of Indigenous Peoples is part of mankind's cultural patrimony and the customs and usages of the Indigenous Peoples must be respected by nation states". But the problem in the Indian context is that small and isolated ancestral languages and cultures, whose number is less than 10,000, get eliminated in official assessments like the Census Reports. Many apprehend that after a few decades some of these languages might vanish. In case of a few languages, there is the crisis of identity. For example, because of political reasons and fear of being driven out, the speakers of Taron in Manipur claim they speak Tangkhul because they live in a Tangkhul dominated area. In other words, languages with less number of speakers are bound to disappear. Therefore, there are gross contradictions between objectives to be achieved and methods of achieving. Concerted efforts are, therefore, needed to save tribal languages and cultures from extinction; what is required now is a commitment with confidence to cherish India's age-old pride for its multicultural and multi-lingual societies.

Check Your Progress - III

1. Discuss various models for the development of scripts for tribal languages in India.
2. Which factors are commonly attributed to the loss or death of languages?
3. Write a short essay on the issue of preservation of tribal languages.

5.6 Let Us Sum Up

In this Unit, we discussed the linguistic scenario in India with special reference to tribal languages and their distribution. We also discussed the issue of mother tongue for teaching to tribal children in primary schools. Some attention was given the problem of scripts for tribal languages. We also talked about the reasons for loss or death of tribal education and the need to preserve and maintain them. Finally, it was said that language is an essential component of the cultural heritage of a nation and hence, special efforts should be made to preserve our otherwise endangered tribal languages.

5.7 Key Words

Linguistic Genocide	:	Murdering of languages.
Scheduled Language	:	A language recognized as an official language of India.
Mother tongue	:	A spoken language/dialect with or without script.
Second Language Learner:		Learner of a language other than his/her mother tongue.
Dialectization	:	Fragmentation of a language into dialects and sub-dialects.
Language Loss	:	A state of dilution of a language.
Language Death	:	Extinction of a language without a chance of its revival.

5.8 Check Your Learning

1. Discuss various languages spoken by the tribes of India and their distribution.
2. What are the constitutional provisions on 'right to language' for the Scheduled Tribes of India?
3. Delineate the problems of learning through an alien language at the primary school level.
4. List the initiatives taken by various State Governments and Central Agencies to get rid of the early educational problems of the tribal children.
5. Discuss how to develop a script for tribal languages.
6. Delineate the reasons for the loss of languages.
7. Write a brief note on the preservation and protection of tribal languages in India.

5.9 Suggested Readings

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5.10 Hints/Answers to Questions in Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress - I

1. Discuss all four language families, their divisions, language isolates and distribution of their speakers in India.
2. Write all the Articles of the Constitution of India that relate to the protection and preservation of languages for STs and minorities.
3. Discuss the points under the NPE that include education and mother tongue learning for ST children.

Check Your Progress - II

1. Discuss how important it is to learn in the medium of one's mother tongue at the primary stage of education.
2. Discuss the problems of learning through an alien language.
3. Different State Governments have taken initiatives to impart primary education in tribal languages. Discuss them.

Check Your Progress - III

1. Write about the choice of script, alphabets, spelling, punctuation marks, etc.
2. Discuss about dialectization, dominant language(s), and lack of maintenance, etc.
3. Write on preparation of textbooks, devising scripts, preparation of dictionaries, documentation of indigenous knowledge and folklores, etc.