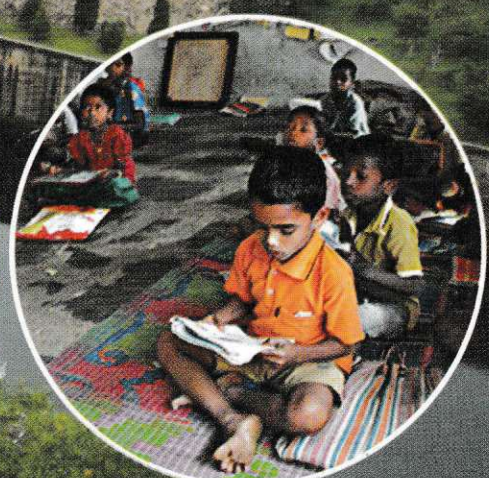




Tribal Development

3

Indira Gandhi
National Open University
School of Extension and
Development Studies

Block

3

TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

UNIT 8

Scheduled Areas and Tribes **5**

UNIT 9

Tribal Development: Policy and Programmes **33**

UNIT 10

Tribal Welfare: Planning and Management **72**

Expert Committee

Prof. V. N. Rajasekharan Pillai
Vice-Chancellor, IGNOU
New Delhi

Prof. Parvin Sinclair
Pro-Vice-Chancellor, IGNOU
New Delhi

Prof. Srikrishnadeva Rao
Director, School of Law, IGNOU
New Delhi

Prof. B. K. Pattanaik
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Studies, IGNOU, New Delhi

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Former Director
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Professor, Deptt. of Home Science and Extension,
Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati

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National Institute of Rural Development
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Former Professor of Criminology
University of Delhi, Delhi

Prof. Balam Paswan
Head, Department of Population Policies and
Programme, International Institute for Population
Sciences, Mumbai

Dr. M. V. Lakshmi Reddy
Reader, School of Education, and
Programme Coordinator, MAAE, SOEDS
IGNOU, New Delhi.

Course Team

Course Contribution

Dr. P. M. Sandhya Rani (Units 8, 9 & 10)
Associate Professor
Centre for Development Studies, SOSS
Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai

Unit Design, Format Editing & Course Coordination

Dr. M. V. Lakshmi Reddy
Reader, School of Education
IGNOU, New Delhi

Content and Language Editing

Dr. M. V. Lakshmi Reddy
Reader, SOE, IGNOU
New Delhi

Print Coordination

Sh. A.S. Chhatwal
D.R. (P)
MPDD, IGNOU, New Delhi

Sh. Arvind Kumar
A.R. (P)
MPDD, IGNOU, New Delhi

Sh. Babu Lal Rewadia
S.O. (P)
MPDD, IGNOU, New Delhi

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COURSE MAEE - 001 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Block 1 Introduction to Sustainable Development

Unit 1 Sustainable Development: Concept and Scope

Unit 2 Sustainable Development: Approaches and Strategies

Unit 3 Challenges to Sustainable Development

Block 2 Rural Development

Unit 4 Rural Development: Indian Context

Unit 5 Rural Development Administration

Unit 6 Rural Development Programmes-I

Unit 7 Rural Development Programmes-II

Block 3 Tribal Development

Unit 8 Scheduled Areas and Tribes

Unit 9 Tribal Development: Policy and Programmes

Unit 10 Tribal Welfare: Planning and Management

Block 4 Urban Development

Unit 11 Introduction to Urban Development

Unit 12 Urban Development: Issues and Challenges

Unit 13 Urban Development Policies and Programmes

Unit 14 Urban Planning, Governance and Management

BLOCK 3 TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

Introduction to the Block

This Block deals with tribal development. It explains the concepts – ‘tribes’, ‘indigenous people’, ‘de-notified tribes’ and ‘nomadic tribes’ – and highlights their significance in Indian context. It presents the broad characteristics and status of the Scheduled Tribes including major types of the Scheduled Tribes present in India. It discusses the aspects of development and deprivation of the Scheduled Tribes along with broad approaches to their development including special measures / policies / programmes, etc aimed at protection of their rights and interests. It presents a comprehensive picture of tribal welfare policy planning, implementation and management, among other relevant things. It has the following three units.

Unit 8 titled “*Scheduled Areas and Tribes*” discusses, at length, the concepts of ‘tribes’ and ‘indigenous people’, explains the relationship and differences between the two concepts along with a debate in favour and against their usage including the significance of the usage of these terms in both Indian and international discourse and practice. It provides clarity on the position of the so-called ‘de-notified’ and ‘nomadic’ tribes as well as the Scheduled Areas of India. It presents the broad characteristics of tribes, thus providing clear idea of ‘Scheduled Tribes’. It also presents the existing status of the Scheduled Tribes in view of the provisions of Constitution of India as well as the advantages that are provided to them in the Scheduled Areas. Further, it gives a broad picture of different major types of the Scheduled Tribes present in India.

Unit 9 “*Tribal Development: Policy and Programmes*” presents population growth and aspects of development and deprivation of the Scheduled Tribes, broad approaches to their development, as well as special measures including the policies and programmes aimed at protection of their rights and interests with a focus on promotion of their development and integration or mainstreaming into national development.

Unit 10 is on “*Tribal Welfare: Planning and Management*”. It describes the role, mandate, strategy and concerns/constraints of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. It presents a comprehensive picture of tribal welfare policy planning, implementation and management along with a brief review of tribal development policies and programmes. It highlights diverse and special schemes aimed at promoting tribal welfare covering different aspects of their life. It touches upon certain claims and other related matters such as issue of Scheduled Tribe Certificates and procedure for inclusion in and/or exclusion from the list of the Scheduled Tribes.

UNIT 8 SCHEDULED AREAS AND TRIBES

Structure

- 8.0 Introduction
- 8.1 Objectives
- 8.2 Tribes: Concept, Significance and Characteristics
 - 8.2.1 Concept and Significance of Tribes
 - 8.2.1.1 Usage of the Term 'Tribe' in India
 - 8.2.1.2 Usage of the Terms 'Indigenous People' and 'Tribes as Indigenous People'
 - 8.2.2 Significance of Debate on 'Indigenous People' Status of Tribes
 - 8.2.2.1 Arguments Against 'Indigenous People' Status
 - 8.2.2.2 Arguments in Favour of 'Indigenous People' Status
 - 8.2.3 Characteristics of Tribes
- 8.3 Constitutional Status and Types of Tribes
 - 8.3.1 Constitutional Status of Scheduled Tribes in India
 - 8.3.2 'De-notified' and 'Nomadic' Tribes of India
- 8.4 Scheduled Area: Regulations for Scheduled Areas and Tribes
 - 8.4.1 Definition of Scheduled Area
 - 8.4.2 Purpose and Advantages of Scheduled Areas
 - 8.4.3 The Major Tribes: Measures for Welfare of Primitive Tribal Groups
- 8.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 8.6 Answers to 'Check Your Progress' Questions
- 8.7 References

8.0 INTRODUCTION

We are aware that the human societies in the earliest stages of development lived in different isolated areas in small groups exhibiting rigid and specific cultural traits with many primitive characteristics. As the ages passed, these societies have gradually become modernized due to increasing effect of many advances in science and technology as well as their contact with other cultures. Yet, some of these societies, for various reasons, continued as primitive and under-developed societies. Some of these societies are called 'Tribes', among many others. The tribal societies are, in fact, small, compact and dispersed groups with less communication facilities and restricted spatial and temporal changes. They have their own social, legal, religious and political relations as well as characteristic self-sufficiency and world-view. Respective Governments of the countries concerned have also recognized their identity, given them due status and, at the same time, attempted to promote their interests, rights and welfare. Therefore, in this Unit, we will focus our discussion on the concept, significance, types, legal recognition and status, among other things, of the Scheduled Areas and Tribes.

8.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, we expect you to be able to:

- Explain the concept and significance of Tribes;

- Trace the origin of the concept of 'indigenous people' and arguments in favour and against its usage in India;
- Describe constitutional status, characteristics and different types of Tribes in India; and
- Define the 'Scheduled Areas' and appreciate the advantages associated with these areas.

8.2 TRIBES: CONCEPT, SIGNIFICANCE AND CHARACTERISTICS

Before we begin our discourse on different aspects and related to Tribes, it is appropriate for us to have clarity, first, on the concept of 'tribes'.

8.2.1 Concept and Significance of Tribes

The term "*tribe*" originated around the time of the Greek city-states and the early formation of the Roman Empire. The Latin term "*tribus*" has since been transformed to mean, "a group of persons forming a community and claiming descent from a common ancestor" (Oxford English Dictionary, IX, 1933, p.339). The range of its meanings, however, has grown even further over the intervening years, to include, for example, "Any of various systems of social organization comprising several local villages, bands, districts, lineages or other groups, and sharing a common ancestry, language, culture and name" (Morris, 1980, p.1369) and notes that a tribe is a "group of persons with a common occupation, interest or habit, and a large family." Today, the range of groups referred to as 'tribal' is truly enormous. Not everyone, however, can be deemed to be a member of a 'tribe'. More recent is, those peoples who resisted joining in larger nation-state entities were also labelled by the nation-states themselves to be "tribes." Fried (1975, p.98) argued that, "the precipitation of tribes was triggered by the emergence of the state, but did not really get into high gear until the emergence of the ancient empires and, later in a greater burst, after the appearance of colonialism and imperialism" (Robert J. Gregor at <http://www.krepublishers.com/02-Journals/T%20&%20T/T%20&%20T-01-0-000-000-2003-Web/T%20&%20T-01-1-001-090-2003-Abst-PDF/T%20&%20T-01-1-001-005-2003-Gregory/T%20&%20T-01-1-001-005-2003-Gregory.pdf>).

D. N. Majumdar defines 'tribe' as 'a social group with territorial affiliation, endogamous with no specialization of functions ruled by tribal officers hereditary or otherwise, united in language or dialect recognizing social distance with other tribes or castes'. According to Ralph Linton 'tribe is a group of bands occupying a contiguous territory or territories and having a feeling of unity deriving from numerous similarities in a culture, frequent contacts and a certain community of interests'. L. M. Lewis believes that tribal societies which are small in scale are restricted in the spatial and temporal range of their social, legal and political relations and possess a morality, a religion and a world-view of corresponding dimensions. Characteristically too, tribal languages are unwritten, and hence, the extent of communication both in time and space is inevitably narrow. At the same time, tribal societies exhibit a remarkable economy of design and have a compactness and self-sufficiency lacking in modern society (<http://www.sociologyguide.com/tribal-society/index.php>).

8.2.1.1 Usage of the Term 'Tribe' in India

The Anthropological Survey of India under the 'People of India Project' identifies 461 tribal communities in India. They are enumerated at 67,583,800 persons constituting

8.08 per cent of the total population as per the 1991 census. The share of the scheduled tribe population to the total population in 1971 and 1981 was 6.94 and 7.85 per cent respectively. The question of tribes in India is closely linked with administrative and political considerations. Hence, there has been increasing demand by groups and communities for their inclusion in the list of scheduled tribes of the Indian Constitution. That partly explains the steady increase in the proportion of the scheduled tribe population in India especially in the period between 1971 and 1981. There has been more concern with the identification of tribes than with their definition. This does not mean that lists have been drawn without any conception of tribe whatsoever. There did exist some conception, as was obvious from the use of criteria that were adopted. These ranged from such features as geographical isolation, simple technology and condition of living, general backwardness to the practice of animism, tribal language, physical features, etc. The problem, however, remains in the fact that they were neither clearly formulated nor systematically applied. One set of criteria was used in one context and quite another in another context. The result is that, the list includes groups and communities strikingly different from each other in respect of not only size of the population but also the level of technology and other characteristics. Indian anthropologists have been acutely aware of a certain lack of fit between what their discipline defines as tribe and what they are obliged to describe as tribes. Yet, they have continued with the existing labels (Virginius Xaxa, See <http://www.scribd.com/doc/20637989/Tribes-as-Indigenous-People-of-India-Virginius-Xaxa-the-Idea>).

The early ethnographers were not very clear about the distinction between 'caste' and 'tribe' in India. The 18th century writings, for example, showed synonymous use of the term 'tribe' with caste. Later, it was even used in a cognate manner, as one could see, in the use of phrase 'caste and tribes of India' by Risley and many others in their writings. Efforts to make a distinction between the two began after initiative was taken to collect detailed information about the people for the census. The census officials were, however, far from clear with regard to the criterion of distinction. It is with the 1901 census that one finds a mention of criteria, howsoever inadequate that may be. It defined tribes as those who practised 'animism'. In the subsequent censuses *animism* was replaced by 'tribal religion'. Although the criterion so introduced was highly unsatisfactory, it continued to be used widely and extensively. It is only in the post-independence period that more systematic effort was made towards distinguishing tribe from caste. Though the distinction between the two was made in both colonial and post-colonial ethnography, the relation between the two was differently conceived in the two ethnographies. In the colonial ethnography, the concern shown by the British administrators-scholars was to mark off tribe from caste. Hence, tribes were shown to be living in complete isolation from the rest of the population and, therefore, without any interaction or interrelation with them. In contrast, the main concern in the native ethnography has been to show close interaction of the tribes with the larger society or the civilisation. Both Ghurye (1963, mentioned in Virginius Xaxa, op. cit.) and Bose (1975, mentioned in Virginius Xaxa, op. cit.), for example, stressed the nature of interaction between tribes and the larger Hindu society and the ways in which tribes have been drawn into the Hindu society. They stressed similarities between the two societies. Sinha (1958, mentioned in Virginius Xaxa, op. cit.) even goes to the extent of viewing tribes as a dimension of little tradition that cannot be adequately understood unless it is seen in relation to the great tradition. In view of such conception, tribes have come to be primarily studied in relation to features and characteristics of the larger society. The focus is on how tribes are getting absorbed into the larger society, the so-called mainstream, by becoming caste, peasant, class and so on. With such conceptualisation, the identity of the tribal group or community is indeed put at risk.

This is because of the way tribes have been conceptualised in anthropological literature and the reference with which tribal society in India is studied.

Tribes are primarily seen as a stage and type of society. They represent a society that lacks positive traits of the modern society and, thus, constitutes a simple, illiterate and backward society. With change in these features on account of education, modern occupation, new technology, etc, tribal society is no longer considered to be tribal. If transformation is in the direction of caste society then it is described as having become 'caste society'. If the reference is peasant then it is posited as the peasant society and if the general direction of transformation is social differentiation, then it is described as differentiated or stratified, and thus ceases to be tribal society. In the process it is forgotten that tribe besides being a stage and type of society is also a society alike and similar to any other kind of society, say the Oriya or the Bengali. But, it is precisely this that comes to be denied on account of the changed situation. Of course, it is true that the tribes are not of the same stage and type as Bengali or Oriya societies. There is then something clumsy about the use of the term 'tribe' in describing the Indian social reality (Virginius Xaxa, See <http://www.scribd.com/doc/20637989/Tribes-as-Indigenous-People-of-India-Virginius-Xaxa-the-Idea>).

8.2.1.2 Usage of the Terms 'Indigenous People' and 'Tribes as Indigenous People'

Above discussed conceptual and empirical problems inherent in the use of the term 'tribe' or 'tribal society' could to some extent be overcome by the use of the term *indigenous* but not without giving rise to other problems. The term 'indigenous' or its equivalent has been used in anthropology to describe groups called 'tribes' for quite some time. Its use, now has, however, gone beyond the discipline of anthropology.

- i) **Usage of the term 'indigenous people' in India:** The idea of 'indigenous people' is an issue of considerable contention in India today. This was hardly so till a few years ago. In fact, social workers, administrators, politicians and even scholars widely used this term to refer to a certain category of people. They hardly felt any unease in the use of native equivalent of this term, viz., *adivasi*. Ghurye had, of course, some reservation to the use of such terms; the expression he used was so-called *aborigines*. Again, it is they who took the term along with all the prejudices and conjectures to the masses. That is how the identity of *adivasis* has entered into the consciousness of the tribal people. The identity that was forced upon them from outside, precisely to mark out differences from the dominant community, has now been internalised by the people themselves. Not only has it become an important mark of social differentiation and identity assertion but also an important tool of articulation for empowerment. With this, the term has come to occupy wide currency in general as well as in the other social sciences literature (Ibid).

The term *indigenous people*, though of recent coinage at the international level, has been in use in India for a long time. In fact, the social workers, missionaries and political activists have been using the term 'adivasi', the Indian-language term for the 'indigenous people', freely to refer to the tribal people since the turn of the present century. The term, in conjunction with other related terms such as *aborigines*, *autochthonous*, etc, has also been extensively used by scholars and administrators in their writings and reports. The term was used mainly as a mark of identification and differentiation, that is, to mark out a group of people different in physical features, language, religion, custom, social organisation, etc. Even Ghurye (1963: 12 mentioned in Virginius Xaxa, op. cit.), who otherwise talks of tribes as backward Hindus and has reservation about the use of the term 'adivasi', refers to them as

the aborigines. He writes, “when the history of internal movements of peoples is not known, it is utterly unscientific to regard some tribe or the other as the original owner of the soil. It is possible to contend that even if the tribes are not aborigines of the exact area they now occupy, they are the autochthonous of India and to that extent they may be called the *aborigines*.” Thus, hardly any unease was felt by scholars in the use of the term to refer to these groups of people. No effort whatsoever was made to dispel the myth associated with the term then (Virginus Xaxa, op.cit).

- ii) **Usage of the term ‘indigenous people’ at international level:** In the deliberations of the international agencies, the term ‘indigenous people’ was used for the first time in 1957 when the general conference of the ILO adopted a convention concerning protection and integration of indigenous and other tribal and semi-tribal population in independent countries. This category of people was progressively being marginalised and dispossessed from their sources of livelihood and was vulnerable to cultural shock and decimation of their collective identity. The convention framed general international standards for facilitating government actions towards protecting and promoting progressive integration of these people into the respective national communities (Convention No.107). By 1985 the ILO felt the need to revise the convention on account of changes in attitudes and approaches towards these people worldwide. This was so because the international organisations and increasing number of governments were moving toward greater recognition of the rights of indigenous and tribal people to retain their specific identities and to participate fully in the planning and execution of the activities affecting their way of life. Accordingly, the ILO adopted a revised convention (No.169) in 1989 after the expert committee appointed by the ILO gave its recommendation and the same was passed in consultation with other international bodies. The context of the discourse on the *indigenous*, initiated by the ILO and later accepted by the UNO, thus, basically hinged on the twin concepts of ‘need-right’ and ‘power-right’ of a certain social category of people all over the world. The international agencies are increasingly and extensively making use of this term and concept in their deliberations and discussions. It gained wide currency after 1993 with the declaration of the year 1993 as the International Year of the Indigenous People (Virginus Xaxa, op.cit).

The ILO convention referred to above and the Working Group on Indigenous Population set up by the Human Rights Commission of the UNO speaks of the ‘indigenous population’ as follows: They are those tribal and semi-tribal population that are regarded as having their descent from the populations which inhabited the country or the geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of the conquest or colonisation by Europe. They are also those who irrespective of their legal status live more in conformity with their social, economic and cultural institutions than with the institution of the nation to which they belong (Pathy, 1992b, mentioned in Virginus Xaxa, op. cit). The *semi-tribal population* are defined as those who are in the process of losing their identity but not yet integrated in the national community. Thus, there are three aspects which are central to the conceptualisation of the indigenous people. *First*, the indigenous people are those who lived in the country to which they belong before colonisation or conquest by people from outside the country or the geographical region. *Secondly*, they have become marginalised as an aftermath of conquest and colonisation by the people from outside the region. *Thirdly*, such people govern their life more in terms of their own social, economic and cultural institution than the laws applicable to the larger society or the country at large. What is important here is that the notion of

indigenous people, despite sharing attributes in common with the people described as the tribal and semi-tribal population, is seen as different from the latter in the sense that the indigenous are invariably marked out as a distinct international entity. That is, the indigenous are invariably seen as victims of conquest and colonisation from outside the region; hence the outsiders are easily identifiable (Virginus Xaxa, op.cit).

The Government of India had, in fact, placed no objection to the use of the term *indigenous people* when it was deliberated upon in the ILO convention in 1957 and was tied to covenant 107. This was so because the term then had not raised such issues as empowerment and rights; rather it had articulated the need of integrating the indigenous and tribal people into the larger social and political system. By contrast, the focus had shifted from integration to one of rights and empowerment by 1989. And no sooner had the issue shifted than the argument ensued that a category such as this does not hold in the Indian context (Virginus Xaxa, op.cit).

To conclude, the term *indigenous people*, however, did not remain confined to only the scholars, administrators, politicians and social workers; it percolated down also to the people. Indeed, it is social workers, political activists, administrators who took the term and along with it all the prejudices and conjectures to the masses (Sengupta 1988:1003, mentioned in Virginus Xaxa, op. cit.). The term, thus, came to be widely used to refer to the tribal people. It was hardly questioned, let alone debated. So long as it had not assumed a political dimension, it had remained an accepted term of description and designation of certain category of people. It is only with the internationalisation of the rights and privileges associated with it that the use of the term indigenous has come to be critically examined or even challenged in the Indian context. The sense in which the term was used earlier and the sense in which it has come to be used today are definitely not identical, though they overlap in some sense. Today, aspects of *marginalisation* are built into the definition of 'indigenous people'. Only those people that have been subjected to domination and subjugation have come to constitute the component of the indigenous people. Yet, the use of the term *adivasi* (indigenous) to designate certain category of people and not the other category clearly reveals that these aspects were not altogether lost sight of. It may be noted that even earlier the term was used to delineate people who were backward and cut off from the mainstream civilisation. The basic mark of differentiation was between those who were part of the civilisation and those who were not. Hence, the use of the term 'adivasi' to describe tribal people seems to have some validity even in the sense of marginalisation. Historical antiquity may have been more distant criteria, but the most immediate and proximate seemed to be the fact that they were *not part of the civilisation*. The aspect of marginalisation was, thus, taken note of while designating a group as adivasi. This seems all the more obvious when we take the other aspects of the Indian society. The coming of the Aryans has been invariably taken as the decisive historical factor to determine the original people of India. Yet, not all the original people have been called the indigenous people. The groups speaking languages belonging to the Dravidian linguistic stock, no doubt, have been considered the inhabitants of India before the coming of the Aryans. Yet, they have never been described as the indigenous people, mainly because they do not constitute the marginalised groups (Virginus Xaxa, op.cit).

8.2.2 Significance of Debate on 'Indigenous People' Status of Tribes

In this sub-section, we will focus our discussion on the debate on 'indigenous people' status of the Scheduled Tribes in India.

8.2.2.1 Arguments Against 'Indigenous People' Status

Much of the discussion questioning the indigenous people's status in India has centered on the complex historical processes of the *movement* of the population and their *settlement* in the subcontinent.

- 1) It is said that unlike in the America, Australia and New Zealand with a recent history of conquest, immigration and colonisation, in India identification of indigenous people is not easy. Rather there have been, in India, waves of movement of populations with different language, race, culture, religion dating back centuries and millennia. Even groups or communities described as tribes have not been outside of this process. Given this, how far back should one go in history to determine people who are natives and who are immigrants is a major issue. Indeed any demarcation is going to be arbitrary and hence extremely contentious. It is also maintained that the communities described as tribes have been living in close proximity with the non-tribal people for over centuries leading to much acculturation and even assimilation into the larger Hindu society. The Indian experience, it is stated, is different from that of the new world and marked by conquest, subjugation and even decimation. It is hence argued that it is not only the point of departure that is problematic but also the Indian experience (Virginus Xaxa, op. cit.).
- 2) It is with the people described as 'tribes' that the term 'indigenous people' has generally come to be associated in India. It is assumed that they have been the original settlers of what geographically constitutes India today or at least people who inhabited the region before the coming of the more dominant sections of the Indian society, viz. the Aryans. They are said to belong to social groups other than the Aryans and speak a variety of dialects belonging presumably to two main linguistic families, viz. the Dravidian and the Austric. The plausibility of groups speaking Tibeto-Burman languages is not altogether ruled out from the purview of the status of the original inhabitants in India. These groups have generally been described as *adivasis* or *the original people* by social workers, missionaries, political activists, scholars and administrators since the beginning of the present century. Ray (1973:124-25, mentioned in Virginus Xaxa, op. cit.) writes, "The communities of people of today whom the anthropologists call tribals, happen to be the indigenous, autochthonous (*adivasis*, *adimjati*) people of the land, in the sense that they had long been settled in different parts of the country before the Aryan-speaking peoples penetrated India to settle down first, in the Kabul and Indus valleys and then within a millennium and half, to spread out in slow stages, over large areas of the country and push their way of life and civilisation over practically the entire area of the country along the plains and the river valleys" (Virginus Xaxa, op. cit.). The questions that are of central importance here are:
 - i) Whether groups designated as tribes have been natives of India and non-tribes immigrants? and
 - ii) If they have not been natives, whether their settlement is prior to that of the arrival of the major social group, the Aryans?

Most of the scholars are of the view that tribes could hardly make legitimate claim that they are the only natives of India. They cite observations made by scholars, howsoever conflicting they may be, in support of their position. Hutton, for example, is of the view that only the Negritos may be considered as the original inhabitants of India though they do not have any marked presence now. He considers groups belonging to the Austric, Dravidian categories, etc, as much outsiders as the Aryans.

Guha is also cited for making similar observation in the context of Austric speaking people (Shah, 1982, mentioned in Virginius Xaxa, op. cit.). But, more authoritative sources on which such claim is questioned are the traditions of the tribes themselves as they speak. Dube (1977:2, mentioned in Virginius Xaxa, op. cit.) writes, "it is difficult to speak of 'original' inhabitants, for tribal traditions themselves make repeated mention of migration of their ancestors. There is considerable evidence to suggest that several groups were pushed out of the areas where they were first settled and had to seek shelter elsewhere. And there are several groups, now absorbed in Hindu society, which can make an equally tenable claim to being original or, at any rate very old inhabitants". There are two substantive points that have been made here (Virginius Xaxa, op. cit.):

- i) Whether one can speak of tribes as the original people especially in view of their *migratory movement*? This is indeed an important argument and cannot be brushed aside.
- ii) Reference to the claims that may be made by groups that have been *absorbed into the Hindu society*. The latter suffers from a certain flaws: a) It is hypothetical, and b) the groups lose the right to make such claim by virtue of their choice to get absorbed into the dominant society, viz. the Hindu society.

Crucial question: Now, the crucial question involved is: Are all tribal groups the inhabitants that settled the territory before the coming of the Aryans, the assumed cut-off point for demarcating the indigenous people in India? Whereas this is more or less the case, it cannot be said with certainty for all the groups described as tribes in India. It is said that there are tribes in India especially in the north-east whose settlement in the territories they inhabit today is an even later phenomenon than the settlement of many non-tribes in other parts of India. The *Nagas*, for example, are stated to have come to India around the middle of the first millennium BC first to Tibet and later to the territory where they live now, a period later than the coming of the Aryans. The *Mizos* are said to have settled in the territory where they live only in the 16th century. The Kuki settlement is considered even later than that of the Mizos. In contrast to this, the non-tribal groups like the Bengalis, Gujaratis, Oriyas, etc, have a much longer history of settlement than these tribes. Given this, it becomes indeed problematic to say that all tribal people in India are earlier settlers than the Aryans, and therefore tribes are indigenous and non-tribes non-indigenous. There is a need to make distinction between settlement in the context of country (India being the reference point here) as a whole and settlement within its parts or regions. In the discourse on indigenous people, the two aspects are either ignored or mixed or even interchanged. An argument valid at one level, for example at the local level, is often used to substantiate the argument at another level, such as the country as a whole. The Santhals may have settled in the territory where they live now, the Santhal Pargana or its adjacent areas, in the beginning of the 19th century. They may have even settled there later than the Bengalis. But, that in no way negates the fact that their settlement in India is prior to that of the groups commonly referred to as the Aryans such as the Bengalis or Gujaratis. Also, to claim indigenous status on this ground is not so simple. For example, the settlement of the Mizos in India may have been a later development than those of the Gujaratis or Bengalis, but the fact remains that they are the original settlers of the place where they live now (Virginius Xaxa, op. cit.).

It needs to be mentioned here that the tribal groups in India are not solely comprised of the Dravidian and Austro-Asiatic speaking groups. A very large number of the tribal groups, in fact, belong to the Tibeto-Burman speaking groups, many of

whom can hardly be considered indigenous, if the arrival of the Aryans is taken as the cut-off mark to decide who is indigenous and who is not indigenous. To restrict the term 'indigenous people' to refer to only those groups of people who had entry prior to those of Indo-Aryan group would be to exclude many tribal groups of the Tibeto-Burman family from the status of indigenous people. There are also tribal groups like the Bhils that speak languages of the Indo-Aryan family. This poses the problem of their identification as indigenous people. Yet, it is generally held that the groups so referred have been drawn into the languages they speak through the process of interaction and acculturation with the Indo-Aryan speaking groups. In terms of their culture and physical features, they are, however, still considered different from the Indo-Aryan population (Hermanns, 1957:23, mentioned in Virginius Xaxa, op.cit.).

- 3) What follows from the above argument is that the people identified and described as tribals are not to be necessarily treated as indigenous; and there are tribal groups which could be treated as indigenous and others which could not. In contrast, many groups and communities especially those belonging to the Dravidian language speaking group such as the Tamilians, Telegus, Malyalis, among others, could stake a claim of being indigenous people by virtue of the fact that they have been inhabitants of India prior to the coming of the Aryans. They are, however, not recognised as tribals and share a few attributes in common with the tribals who stand dispossessed, exploited and marginalised. Rather they constitute a part of the dominant national community. In terms of other criteria that go to make up indigenous people, viz., marginalised status, loss of control over resources, etc., they can hardly be considered for the indigenous people status. The congruence between the term and the concept on which the tribal activists defend the application of the term does not stand valid in all situations (Virginius Xaxa, op. cit.).
- 4) Such claim is difficult to establish today. Not only have the tribal communities been brought under uniform administrative and legal structures under the British but they have also been drawn into the politico-economic process of the larger society especially in the post-independence period of economic development. There are very few tribes which have escaped such processes. The actual empirical reality is then too complex. It is not at all surprising then that elsewhere Roy-Burman (1983:1172-74, mentioned in Virginius Xaxa, op. cit.) writes, "even many of those with the simplest technology were integrated with the wider society". In short, the use of the term indigenous to describe tribal people in India is fraught with difficulties. It does not reflect an empirical reality but is more of a political construction (Virginius Xaxa, op.cit). Though the question of indigenous people has been generally discussed in the context of the country as a whole, the discussion in the Indian context has also been drawn in relation to the regions or territories within the country. It has generally been observed that there have been so many migrations in and out of the region in the past centuries that no particular 'jati' can have genuine grounds for making a claim to be the original inhabitants (Betteille, 1998:189; and Hardiman, 1987:15-16, mentioned in Virginius Xaxa, op. cit.). Often the problem at the level of the country is used to make case against tribes being indigenous at the regional/local level and vice versa. Posing the question of tribes as the indigenous people in relation to territories within the country rather than the country as a whole indeed gives rise to problems of somewhat different nature (Virginius Xaxa, op cit.).
- 5) Movement of populations belonging to different race, ethnicity and linguistic groups including those described as tribals from one place to another is something that

has been in process within India over the centuries. It may also happen, that the same group is indigenous and not indigenous at the same time. The *Oraons*, *Mundas* and many other tribes living in Jharkhand, for example, may have legitimate claim to be called the indigenous people in respect of their settlement in the country called India prior to that of the Aryans or even in respect of their settlement in Jharkhand, but it is not certain if they can claim to be indigenous in Assam or Bengal where they have moved in the course of last one century or so. Indeed their claim of being indigenous is strongly contested in these places. Nowhere is this more true than in Assam where the migrant tribals' claim to be the indigenous people is being disputed by such tribal communities as the *Bodos*, *Mishings* and others who have a much longer history of settlement in the region than the tribals from Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, etc. If, however, one takes India as a whole, then these migrant groups have a much longer record of settlement than the tribes in the north-eastern region. The tribals from this region have also moved in large numbers to Andaman Island and have settled there as cultivators after reclaiming land from the fore-stand in the process dispossessing the native Jarvas from their territories. Thus, the groups which may be indigenous with respect to the country as a whole may not be indigenous in respect of their settlement in a given territory (Virginus Xaxa, op. cit.).

- 6) There is still another ground on which the indigenous claim is contested in the Indian context. It is generally held that the Indian society is made up of a *number of castes and groups* and that many of these have been *formed out of the process of fusion of various groups and communities including tribes*. This is all the more true in case of the regional linguistic communities such as Bengalis, Gujaratis, Oriyas, etc. In view of this, it may become necessary that a segment of the same community be identified as indigenous and another as non-indigenous (Virginus Xaxa, op.cit.).

8.2.2.2 Arguments in Favour of 'Indigenous People' Status

The extension of the term 'indigenous' is however strongly defended by activists and other scholars, both tribals and non-tribals. This is done not so much on the basis of original settlement as on some other consideration.

- 1) The activists, of course, trace the *history of tribals* in India much before the coming of the Aryans, a fact that can hardly be disputed, yet should not be considered 'indigenous people' so that *certain positive international instruments are made applicable to these marginalised and deprived social groups*. Pathy (1992:8, mentioned in Virginus Xaxa, op. cit.), for example, writes that tribals in a way have been victims of conquest and colonisation and, hence, share all the attributes of the colonised people such as ethnic identity, loss of control over customary territorial resources, cultural annihilation and powerlessness. He makes the case despite his recognition that insisting on original settlement in a territory is problematic and unreasonable.
- 2) The issue of colonisation and colonised status also remains far from resolved. *Firstly*, we do not have detailed and well researched historical material on the nature of relations or encounter between groups that are designated as the indigenous people and the other social groups for the periods preceding the coming of the British. Hence, it is difficult to say anything with certainty about the nature of relations between the two types of social groups. In general, the relation between tribes and non-tribes has been described as one of mutual coexistence rather than one of subjugation and domination at least until the advent of British rule. It is said

that most of the studies of the history of Indian civilisation show that the growth and expansion of Hindu society was a prolonged and complex process of assimilation. And, the nature of interaction between the two has been broadly described as one of peaceful coexistence rather than one of conquest and subjugation (Bose, 1941; and Bettleille, 1998:189, mentioned in Virginius Xaxa, op. cit.).

- 3) According to Pathy (1992a:51, mentioned in Virginius Xaxa, op. cit.) there has been a symbiotic relationship between the tribals and the non-tribals rather than that of colonisation and conquest. He writes, "majority of the so-called tribals of India had developed class-structure over a long period of time and, therefore, had interactions with the other communities. Up to the time of colonialism, it was largely not a relationship of domination and subjugation." This means that the question of indigenous people could only be raised from the period of the arrival of the British and the subsequent process of colonisation and subjugation in India. If these processes are taken as the point of departure for demarcation of indigenous people, then the issue of original settlement that is so central to the notion of indigenous people becomes redundant in defining indigenous people (Virginius Xaxa, op.cit).
- 4) In fact, the whole exercise of identification of groups and communities as tribes during the colonial period was to a great extent contingent upon the differences tribes displayed in relation to the larger society. Thus, tribes were by and large considered as that outside civilisation. This means that they not only remained outside the politico-administrative structure of the larger society or the kingdom but also outside the general social organisation and world-view of the larger society. Where people were subjugated they became part of the larger social organisation and failed to maintain their distinctiveness. Whether they lived in hills, plateau or forest and lived by hunting, food-gathering or practiced slash and burn cultivation followed from being outside civilisation. Bettleille (1986:316, mentioned in Virginius Xaxa, op. cit.) has forcefully brought this out. He writes that where tribe and civilisation coexist, as in India and the Islamic world, being a tribe has been more a matter of remaining outside of state and civilisation, whether by choice or necessity, than of attaining a definite stage in the evolutionary advance from the simple to the complex. The Indian practice of regarding as tribes a large assortment of communities, differing widely in size, mode of livelihood and social organisation cannot, therefore, be dismissed as anomalous. They are all tribes because they all stood more or less outside of Hindu civilisation and not because they were all at exactly the same stage of evolution. In short, *they are described as tribes and, therefore, even as indigenous people because they escaped colonisation and subjugation processes.*
- 5) The use of the term 'indigenous people' to refer to the tribal people is defended on yet another ground. It is argued that, unlike antagonists who tend to take note of only historical realism, we have also to take note of critical realism. They state that, irrespective of the place and time of origin or their occupation or their present habitat in India, there are certain communities which until recently maintained, practically and autogenously, sources of legitimisation of cultural and social processes and were accentuated by the ideology of a self-regulated economy and had only marginal articulation with the external political structures. Their indigenous identity cannot be brushed away by juxta-position of non-meaningful occurrences in space and time in systemic terms (Roy-Burman, 1992:24, mentioned in Virginius Xaxa, op. cit.).

8.2.3 Characteristics of Tribes

With the above understanding of the concept of tribes, it becomes easy for us now to understand and appreciate the characteristics of tribes.

T. B. Naik (<http://www.sociologyguide.com/tribal-society/index.php>) has given the following features of tribes in Indian context.

- A tribe should have least functional interdependence within the community.
- It should be economically backward (i.e. primitive means of exploiting natural resources, tribal economy should be at an underdeveloped stage and it should have multifarious economic pursuits).
- There should be a comparative geographical isolation of its people.
- They should have a common dialect.
- Tribes should be politically organized and community panchayat should be influential.
- A tribe should have customary laws.

Naik (Ibid) argues that for a community to be a tribe it should possess all the above mentioned characteristics and a very high level of acculturation with outside society debars it from being a tribe. Thus, term usually denotes a social group bound together by kin and duty and associated with a particular territory.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under “Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’ Questions.”

- 1) Explain the terms ‘tribes’ and ‘indigenous people’ in Indian and international context.

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- 2) What are the characteristics of ‘tribes’?

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8.3 CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS AND TYPES OF TRIBES

With above understanding of the concept and characteristics of tribes, we will now look at the actual status and types of tribes in India.

8.3.1 Constitutional Status of Scheduled Tribes in India

The Government of India officially does not consider any specific section of its population as 'indigenous people' as generally understood and implied in its usage in UN. Rather the government claims all its people as indigenous. However, operationally in many of its dealings, those section of people declared as falling within the administrative category of Scheduled Tribes' (STs) are considered as indigenous peoples. Though, the STs are not synonymous with either the socially and historically accepted term 'Adivasis' (meaning indigenous or original peoples) or 'tribal', by and large, it is accepted that the STs include mostly 'indigenous people' in the Indian context.

Though the 'Scheduled Tribes' is an administrative term used for the purpose of administering certain specific constitutional privileges, protection and benefits for specific section of people, historically it was considered as the disadvantaged and the backward. *Article 366(25)* of the Constitution of India defines scheduled tribes as such tribes or tribal communities or part of it, or group within such tribes, or tribal communities as are deemed under *Article 342* to be scheduled tribes for the purpose of this constitution. The scheduled tribe status confers on the tribe, or a part of it, a constitutional status invoking the safeguards provided for in the constitution in their respective States/UTs. The scheduled tribe status is conferred on the basis of birth of a person into a scheduled tribe.

According to clause 1 of *Article 342*, the scheduled tribes are the tribes or tribal communities or part of a group within these tribes and tribal communities which have been declared as such by the President of India through a public notification. Thus, the President notifies the scheduled tribe in relation to a particular State / Union Territory (UT), and not on an all Indian basis, by an order after consultation with the State Government concerned. These orders can be modified subsequently, to include or exclude, but through an Act of parliament under Clause 2 of this Article.

Although no well defined criteria have been developed for the purpose, the general official refrain has been that the identification of the Scheduled Tribes is done on the basis of the following characteristics:

- Primitive traits;
- Distinctive culture;
- Geographical isolation;
- Shyness of contact with the community at large; and
- Backwardness.

The criteria followed for specification of a community as scheduled tribes are indications of primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, shyness of contact with the community at large, and backwardness. These criteria are not spelt out in the Constitution but have become well established and subsume the definitions contained in 1931 Census, the reports of first Backward Classes Commission 1955, the Advisory Committee (Kalelkar), Revision of SC/ST lists (Lokur Committee), 1965 and the Joint Committee of Parliament on the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Bill 1967 (Chanda Committee, 1969) (See <http://tribal.nic.in/index3.asp?subsublinkid=303&langid=1>). Members of STs who migrated from an area where the community is scheduled to another area within the same state retain the status of ST.

8.3.2 'De-notified' and 'Nomadic' Tribes of India

De-notified tribes (DNTs), also known as *vimukta jati*, are the tribes that were originally listed under the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871 as *Criminal Tribes* “addicted to the systematic commission of non-bailable offences.” Once a tribe became “notified” as criminal, all its members were required to register with the local magistrate, failing which they would be charged with a crime under the Indian Penal Code. The Criminal Tribes Act of 1952 repealed the notification, i.e. ‘de-notified’ the tribal communities. This act, however, was replaced by a series of Habitual Offenders Acts, that asked police to investigate a suspect’s criminal tendencies and whether his occupation is “conducive to settled way of life.” The de-notified tribes were reclassified as habitual offenders in 1959 (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denotified_tribes_of_India).

The so-called de-notified tribes (DNTs) of India should have enjoyed the freedom of independence that came to the rest of India’s people in 1947. Instead, they have languished as the most handicapped community in the nation, with health, literacy and employment levels far below the average (<http://budhantheatre.org/chharanagar/dnts/>).

The British labelled them criminals because they pursued a nomadic way of life. The *nomadic tribes* traditionally carried important commodities such as salt and honey between the coasts and the inland forests. The British relied on these networks to establish their own trading relationships and to guide their armies through unknown regions. Indeed, these traders and transporters of goods were crucial informants for the new rulers, who benefited from tribal knowledge of flora and fauna, transportation and communication (<http://budhantheatre.org/chharanagar/dnts/>).

As railways and telegraphs were built in the 1850s such networks became redundant. The colonial authorities grew nervous about people who moved around, carrying intelligence which they could not control directly. In the aftermath of the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857 these former allies were seen as potential enemies. In 1871, an Act was passed for “the notification of criminal tribes.” Hundreds of tribes that traditionally collected food from the forest became criminals with the stroke of a pen. When they could not be forcibly settled, they were sometimes shot on sight. Those who were settled were subjected to a pass system to control their movements and were rehabilitated through rigorous labor (<http://films.shashwati.com/about-mahasweta-devi/denotified-tribes/>).

These criminal tribes were properly de-notified in 1952 after India’s independence. But, they were reclassified as habitual offenders in 1959. The stigma of the criminal label still follows them to this day. Many laws and regulations in various states prohibit certain communities of people from travelling; others must still register at police stations in the districts they pass through. This close association with authority makes nomadic tribes especially liable to suspicion when crimes actually occur. The percentage of DNTs in custody and under investigation is greatly disproportionate to their population (<http://budhantheatre.org/chharanagar/dnts/>).

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under “Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’ Questions.”

3) What is the constitutional status of the Scheduled Tribes in India?

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4) What do you understand by 'de-notified tribes'?

8.4 SCHEDULED AREA: REGULATIONS FOR SCHEDULED AREAS AND TRIBES

The specification of "Scheduled Areas" in relation to a State/UT is done by a notified order of the President, after consultation with the State Government concerned. The same applies in the case of any alteration, increase, decrease, incorporation of new areas, or rescinding any Orders relating to "Scheduled Areas".

The criteria followed for declaring any area as a "Scheduled Area" under the Fifth Schedule are as follows:

- Preponderance of tribal population,
- Compactness and reasonable size of the area,
- A viable administrative entity such as a district, block or taluk, and
- Economic backwardness of the area as compared to the neighbouring areas.

8.4.1 Definition of Scheduled Area

The term 'Scheduled Areas' has been defined in the Indian Constitution as "such areas as the President may by order declare to be Scheduled Areas". Paragraph 6 of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution prescribes the following procedure for scheduling, rescheduling and alteration of Scheduled Areas (<http://tribal.nic.in/index3.asp?subsublinkid=305&langid=1>).

Scheduled Area

- 1) In this Constitution, expression 'Scheduled Areas' means such areas as the President may by order declare to be Scheduled Areas.
- 2) The President may, at any time, by order:
 - i) Direct that the whole or any specified part of a Scheduled Area shall cease to be a Scheduled Area or a part of such an area;
 - ii) Increase the area of any Scheduled Area in a State after consultation with the Governor;
 - iii) Alter, but only by way of rectification of boundaries, any Scheduled Area.

- iv) On any alteration of the boundaries of a State on the admission into the Union or the establishment of a new State, declare any territory not previously included in any State to be, or to form part of, a Scheduled Area.
 - v) Rescind, in relation to any State or States, any order or orders made under this paragraph, and, in consultation with the Governor of the State concerned, make fresh orders redefining the areas which are to be Scheduled Areas and any such order may contain such incidental and consequential provisions as appear to the President to be necessary and proper, but save as aforesaid, the order made under sub-paragraph (i) of this paragraph shall not be varied by any subsequent order". Thus, the specification of Scheduled Areas in relation to a particular State/Union Territory is by a notified Order of the President, after consultation with the State Governments concerned. The same procedure will apply while altering, increasing or rescinding any order(s) relating to Scheduled Areas.
- 3) The criteria followed for declaring an area as Scheduled Area are preponderance of tribal population; compactness and reasonable size of the area; under-developed nature of the area; and marked disparity in economic standard of the people. These criteria are not spelt out in the Constitution of India but have become well established. They embody principles followed in declaring 'Excluded' and 'Partially-Excluded Areas' under the Government of India Act 1935, Schedule 'B' of recommendations of the Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas Sub-Committee of Constituent Assembly and the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission, 1961.
 - 4) In exercise of the powers conferred by paragraph 6 of the Fifth Schedule to the Constitution, the President, after consultation with the State governments concerned, had by Orders called 'the Scheduled Areas (Part A States) Order, 1950' and 'the Scheduled Areas (Part B States) Order 1950' set out the Scheduled Areas in the States. Further, by Orders namely 'the Madras Scheduled Areas (Cesser) Order, 1951' and 'the Andhra Scheduled Areas (Cesser) Order, 1955' certain areas of the then East Godavari and Visakhapatnam districts were rescheduled. At the time of devising and adopting the strategy of Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) for socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes during Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79), certain areas besides Scheduled Areas were also found having preponderance of tribal population. A review of protective measures available to the tribals of these newly identified areas vis-à-vis Scheduled Areas was made and it was observed that a systematic use of protective measures and other powers available to the executive under Fifth Schedule will help in effective implementation of the development programmes in Sub-Plan Areas. Therefore, in August 1976, it was decided to make the boundaries of the Scheduled Areas co-terminus with the Tribal Sub-Plan areas. Accordingly, Clause (2) of the paragraph 6 of the Fifth Schedule was amended vide the Constitution (Amendment) Act, 1976 to empower the President to increase the area of any Scheduled Areas in any State. Pursuant to above, the President has issued from time to time Orders specifying Scheduled Areas afresh in relation to the States of Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa and Rajasthan. The tribal areas in Himachal Pradesh were scheduled on 27.11.1975. While scheduling the areas in Himachal Pradesh the principle of making the Sub-plan and the Fifth Schedule areas coterminous was kept in view. Thus, presently the Tribal Sub-Plan areas (Integrated Tribal Development Projects / Integrated Tribal Development Agency areas only) are coterminous with Scheduled Areas in the States of Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal

Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa and Rajasthan. The State of Andhra Pradesh, where the Tribal Sub-Plan areas are not coterminous with Scheduled Areas, has also furnished a proposal to this effect which is under examination.

Scheduled Areas and Tribes

The following Orders are in operation at present in their original or amended form.

Sl. No.	Name of Order	Date of notification	Name of states for which applicable
1.	The schedule areas (part A states) Order, 1950 (C.O.9)	26.1.1950	Andhra Pradesh
2.	The schedule areas (part B States) Order, 1950. (C.O.26)	7.12.1950	Andhra Pradesh
3.	The Scheduled Areas (Himachal Pradesh) Order, 1975 (C.O.102)	21.11.1975	Himachal Pradesh
4.	Madhya Pradesh and Orissa) Order, 1977 (CO 109)	31.12.1977	Gujarat and Orissa
5.	The Scheduled Areas (State of Rajasthan) Order, 1981 (C.O.114)	12.2.1981	Rajasthan
6.	The Scheduled Areas (Maharashtra) Order, 1985 (C.O.123)	2.12.1985	Maharashtra
7.	The Scheduled Areas (States of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh) Order, 2003 (C.O. 192)	20.2.2003	Chhattisgarh, and Madhya Pradesh
8.	The Scheduled Areas (State of Jharkhand) Order, 2007 (C.O. 229)	11.04.2007	Jharkhand

The States of Madhya Pradesh and Bihar were reorganised vide the Madhya Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2000 and Bihar Reorganisation Act, 2000 respectively. Consequently, a portion of Scheduled Areas of the composite State of Madhya Pradesh stood transferred to the newly formed State of Chhattisgarh and the whole of Scheduled areas stood transferred to Jharkhand from the parent State of Bihar. In order to ensure that members of the Scheduled Tribes in the newly formed States continue to get the benefits available under the Fifth Schedule to the Constitution, it became necessary to amend the Scheduled Areas (States of Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa) Order, 1977 (C.O.109) issued on 31 December, 1977 in so far as it related to the composite States of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. The President has promulgated a new Constitutional Order specifying the Scheduled Areas in respect of the States of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh on 20th February 2003. The Scheduled Areas in the State of Jharkhand have been redefined to be the Scheduled Areas within the State of Jharkhand vide the Scheduled Areas (State of Jharkhand) Order, 2007 (Constitutional Order 229) dated 11-04-2007.

8.4.2 Purpose and Advantages of Scheduled Areas

The purpose and advantages of an area being declared as Scheduled Areas are as follows (<http://ncst.nic.in/writereaddata/mainlinkFile/File415.pdf>).

- The Governor of a State, which has Scheduled Areas, is empowered to make regulations in respect of the following:
 - Prohibit or restrict transfer of land from tribals;

- ii) Regulate the business of money-lending to the members of Scheduled Tribes. In making any such regulation, the Governor may repeal or amend any Act of Parliament or of the Legislature of the State, which is applicable to the area in question.
- b) The Governor may by public notification direct that any particular Act of Parliament or of the Legislature of the State shall not apply to a Scheduled Area or any part thereof in the State or shall apply to such area subject to such exceptions and modifications as he may specify;
- c) The Governor of a State having Scheduled Areas therein, shall, annually, or whenever so required by the President of India, make a report to the President regarding the administration of the Scheduled Areas in that State, and the executive power of the Union shall extend to the giving of directions to the State as to the administration of the said area;
- d) Tribes Advisory Councils (TAC) shall be established in States having Scheduled Areas. A TAC may also be established in any State having Scheduled Tribes, but not Scheduled Areas, on the direction of the President of India. The TAC should consist of not more than twenty members of whom, as nearly as may be, three-fourth should be from the representatives of the Scheduled Tribes in the Legislative Assembly of the State. The role of TAC is to advise the State Government on matters pertaining to the welfare and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes in the State, as may be referred to it by the Governor;
- e) The Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, vide which provisions of Panchayats contained in Part IX of the Constitution, were extended to Scheduled Areas, also contains special provisions for the benefit of Scheduled Tribes.

The above mentioned constitutional provisions and Acts, among others, provide substantial protection to the interests of the Scheduled Tribes in the Scheduled Areas.

8.4.3 The Major Tribes: Measures for Welfare of Primitive Tribal Groups

There are 533 tribes (with many overlapping types in more than one State), as per the notified Schedule under *Article 342* of the Constitution of India, in different States and Union Territories of the country with the largest number of 62 being in the State of Orissa. Some of the major tribes of different States are as given below (<http://www.tribal.gov.in/writereaddata/mainlinkFile/File722.pdf>).

Table 8.1: Some of the Major Tribes of different States/Union Territories

State/UT	Names of the Tribes
Andhra Pradesh	Bhil, Chenchu, Gond, Kondas, Lambadis, Sugalis, etc.
Assam	Boro, Kachari, Mikir (Karbi), Lalung, Rabha, Dimasa, Hmar, Hajong, etc
Bihar & (Jharkhand)	Asur, Banjar, Birhor, Korwa, Munda, Oraon, Santhal, etc.
Gujarat	Bhil, Dhodia, Gond, Siddi, Bordia, etc
Himachal Pradesh	Gaddi, Gujjar, Lahuala, Swangla, etc
Karnataka	Bhil, Chenchu, Goud, Kuruba, Kammara, Kolis, Koya, Mayaka, Toda, etc.
Kerala	Adiyam, Kammrar, Kondkappus, Malais, Palliyar, etc
Madhya Pradesh & Chhatisgarh	Bhil, Birhor, Damar, Gond, Kharia, Majhi, Munda, Oraon, Parahi, etc.
Maharashtra	Bhil, Bhunjia, Chodhara, Dhodia, Gond, Kharia, Nayaka, Oraon, Pardhi, Rathwa, etc.
Meghalaya	Garos, Khasi, Jaintia, etc.
Orissa	Birhor, Gond, Juang, khond, korua, Mundari, Oraon, Santhal, Tharu, etc.
Rajasthan	Bhil, Damor, Garasta, Meena, Salariya, etc.
Tamilnadu	Irular, Kammara, Kondakapus, Kota, Mahamalar, Pallean, Toda, etc
Tripura	Chakma, Garo, Khasi, Kuki, Lusai, Liang, Santhal, etc
West Bengal	Asur, Birhor, Korwa, Lepcha, Munda, Santhal, etc.
Mizoram	Lusai, Kuki, Garo, Khasi, Jaintia, Mikir, etc
Arunachal Pradesh	Dafla, Khaptri, Singpho, etc
Goa	Dhodi, Siddi (Nayaka) .
Daman & Diu	Dhodi, Mikkada, Varti, etc
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	Jarawa, Nicobarese, Onges, Sentinelese, Shompens, Great Andamanese,
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	As in Daman & Diu
Uttar Pradesh & Uttaranchal	Bhoti, Buxa, Jaunsari, Tharu, Raji,
Nagaland	Naga, Kuki, Mikir, Garo, etc.
Sikkim	Bhutia, Lepcha,
Jammu & Kashmir	Chhaddangpa, Garra, Gujjar, Gaddi, etc.

Nevertheless, among the notified tribes, some groups are still at most primitive stage with low level of literacy, pre-agricultural level of technology and are economically backward. They continue to live in isolated areas and practice either primitive agriculture or no agricultural practice and most of them are still in food gathering stage with almost stagnating or declining population. 75 such groups named as *Primitive Tribal Groups* (PTGs) are spread over 17 States and 1 Union Territory (A & N islands) have been identified and categorized as *Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups* (earlier known as *Primitive Tribal Groups* (PTGs)).

Primitive Tribal Groups: Draft National Tribal Policy, 2006 (a Policy for the Scheduled Tribes of India) deals with the primitive tribes or primitive tribal groups (PTGs), a list of 75 STs, created in 1973, which are supposed to be more backward than the others. The following criteria have generally been used for their classification: (i) pre-agricultural level; (ii) dwelling isolated and remote habitations; (iii) small number; and (iv) near-constant or declining population; (v) low levels of literacy; and (vi) economic and social

backwardness. Regarding the criteria for their identification, the draft notes state that they “suffer from lack of specificity”. Should they be redressed, and an attempt made to evolve specific and operational criteria (Srivastav, 2008).

States/UT-wise list of PTGs is given in the Table below.

Table 8.2: State/UT-wise list of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs)

State/UT	Name of P. T. G. Population
Andhra Pradesh	1.Chenchu, 2.Bodo Gadaba, 3.Gutob Gadaba, 4.Dongria Khond, 5.Kutia Khond, 6.Kolam, 7.Konda Reddi, 8.Kondasavara, 9.Bondo Porja, 10.Khond Porja, 11.Parengi Porja, 12.Thoti
Bihar (Including Jharkhand)	13.Asur (Bihar and Jharkhand), 14.Birhor (Bihar and Jharkhand), 15.Birjia (Bihar and Jharkhand), 16.Hill Kharia (Jharkhand), 17.Korwa (Bihar and Jharkhand), 18.Mal Paharia (Bihar and Jharkhand), 19.Parhaiya (Bihar and Jharkhand), 20.Sauria Paharia (Bihar and Jharkhand), 21.Savar (Bihar and Jharkhand)
Gujarat	22.Kolgha, 23.Kathodi, 24.Kotwalia, 25.Padhar, 26.Siddi
Karnataka	27.Jenu Kuruba, 28.Koraga
Kerala	29.Cholanaikayan, 30.Kadar, 31.Kattunayakan, 32.Koraga, 33.Kurumba
Madhya Pradesh (including Chhattisgarh)	34.Abujh Maria (Chhattisgarh), 35.Baiga (M.P. and Chhattisgarh), 36.Bharia (M.P.), 37.Birhor (Chhattisgarh), 38.Hill Korwa (Chhattisgarh), 39.Kamar (Chhattisgarh), 40.Sahariya (M.P.)
Maharashtra	41.Katkari/Kathodi, 42.Kolam, 42.Maria Gon
Manipur	44.Maram Naga
Orissa	45.Chuktia Bhunjia, 46.Birhor, 47.Bondo, 48.Didayi, 49.Dongria Khond, 50.Juang, 51.Kharia, 52.Kutia Khond, 53.Lanjia Saura, 54.Lodha, 55.Mankirdia, 56.Paudi Bhuyan, 57.Saura
Rajasthan	58.Saharia
Tamil Nadu	59.Irular, 60.Kattunayakan, 61.Kota, 62.Korumba, 63.Paniyan, 64.Toda
Tripura	65.Riang
Uttar Pradesh (including Uttarakhand)	66.Buxa (U.P. and Uttarakhand), 67.Raji (Uttarakhand)
West Bengal	68.Birhor, 69.Lodha, 70.Toto
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	71.Great Andamanese, 72.Jarawa, 73.Onge, 74.Sentinelese, 75.Shom Pen

Source: <http://tribal.gov.in/writereaddata/mainlinkfile/File1082.pdf>.

Most of these groups are small in number, have not attained any significant level of social and economic progress and generally inhabit remote localities having poor infrastructure and administrative support. Therefore, they become the most vulnerable sections among the scheduled tribes. Priorities are, therefore, required to be accorded for their protection and development, and checking the declining trend of their population.

The constitutional position on the scheduled areas needs to be understood and operational directives from the state with a special focus on the governor, the Tribes Advisory Council, customary laws and customary modes of dispute resolution are necessary to enable the scheduled areas to be functional as per the constitutional mandate. The operational framework of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1966 (PESA) needs to be further strengthened. It is equally important to forge linkages between scheduled areas, governance and forest governance especially in the light of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers Act of 2006 (FRA). It is imperative to remove the legal incongruencies regarding specific subjects that are crucial for a dignified tribal life. These include: corrective measures on minor forest produce, preventing land alienation and restoring alienated lands, improving village markets, regulating intoxicants, controlling land acquisition, formulating and approving plans and programmes that affect the tribal community most, identifying and selecting beneficiaries, planning and managing minor water bodies and, last but not the least, resolving disputes through traditional systems and integrating them with the recently introduced gram *nyayalaya* (village level justice system). The scheduled areas and the other tribal-dominated areas also got a shot in the arm with the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers Act of 2006 (FRA) which aims not only to undo historical injustice to the above two categories of people but also mandates that security of tenure is key to integrating the forest dwelling scheduled tribes and other traditional forest dwellers who are dependent on the forest for their livelihoods and for strengthening of the conservation regime.

What the above two tribal welfare legislations along with the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 raise is a larger constitutional mandate which seems to be long forgotten: the creation and administration of scheduled areas (erstwhile partially excluded areas, excluded and tribal areas). These special areas of administration were deliberated upon by the Constitution makers through three subcommittees at the time of independence. The distilled vision on how to manage such areas resulted in the creation of scheduled areas with specific provisions for administering scheduled areas especially through a detailed constitutional mandate. The priorities of the State and its reluctance to devolve power along with the competitiveness of economic development, are gradually eroding the very edifice on which state structure is built – the village assembly. This is more visible in areas that are predominantly inhabited by the tribal communities and which are remote, inaccessible and therefore largely excluded in the current growth model. Not surprisingly, these areas are coterminous with the scheduled areas throughout the plains in India and more particular in central India. Further, the government has to this date followed only a schematic and programmatic approach of handing out largesse, primarily to integrate the marginalised tribal communities into the clichéd mainstream. The schematic approach to such areas coupled with inadequate action on self-empowerment without giving regard to the customs, traditions and the special relationship with land has not worked, and therefore, needs to be corrected immediately. A new scheduled areas governance framework is the key to integrate the marginalised tribals and such vulnerable communities to counter any violent approaches. It is drawn from existing instruments but with a fresh, pragmatic approach. The PESA and the FRA largely aim at improving the situation in tribal-dominated areas especially

regarding competing claims on natural resource do provide hope. But, this is only half the job done. Mere enactments are like skeletons, and flesh and blood and sinews need to be added in the form of operational rules, enabling orders, and easily understandable empowerment tools with massive awareness campaigns on self-governance and community control over natural resources. What is also clear is that the lack of an operational framework of PESA, the ad hoc process of recognition of community entitlements on natural resources especially forests under the FRA may gradually turn latent conflicts to a manifest stage. What is therefore required is a constitutionally backed, operationally easy, and legally sound framework which is transparent, fair and equitable and which caters to the most vulnerable, most marginalised tribal communities. The two key legal instruments, PESA and FRA, provide a reasonable outline towards a model scheduled area governance.

Several activities were and are being carried out apart from confidence building and rapport building with the government on the conflicts around natural resources especially in a scheduled area context. A few of these activities are: assessing the robustness of the adaptations of PESA by the states, specific amendments that are required to smoothen the implementation, breaking the complex model into small doable components on various subject matters such as minor forest produce, land alienation, minor water bodies, tribal sub-plan and participatory models of criteria development to monitor programmes at the village level. Several new dimensions have also emerged relating to over-exploitation of natural resources with little benefits flowing to the community. Therefore, exploring the concept of periphery development fund contributions by those who are using the natural resources, planning process and inclusion of scheduled area development within such state-wide processes is absolutely essential to mitigate conflicts. Several empirical observations now suggest that operational rules and guidelines and/or the autonomy to exercise these rights in an atmosphere of freedom and lack of fear form the key to resolving conflicts in the tribal-dominated areas. Only a silent revolution within the framework of the rule of law will address the core issues. Any other approach would result in only partial, momentary and short-term solution (Upadhyay, 2010).

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under “Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’ Questions.”

5) Define ‘Scheduled Areas’.

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6) Explain the purpose and advantages of Scheduled Area.

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7) What are the major Scheduled Tribes in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar (& Jharkhand), Madhya Pradesh (& Chhattisgarh) and Orissa?

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8) Which are the four states that have large number of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs)? Mention the names of these PTGs in these states.

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8.5 LET US SUM UP

In this Unit, we have discussed at length the concepts of 'tribes' and 'indigenous people' and the relationship between the two along with debate in favour and against the usage of these terms and the significance of their usage in Indian and international discourse and practice. We have also provided you clarity on the position of the so-called 'denotified' and 'nomadic' tribes of India. We have discussed the broad characteristics of tribes that provide clear idea of the Scheduled Tribes. We have also given a broad picture of different major types of Scheduled Tribes present in India along with their existing status and associated advantages as per the Constitution of India.

8.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS' QUESTIONS

- 1) D. N. Majumdar defines *tribe* as a social group with territorial affiliation, endogamous with no specialization of functions ruled by tribal officers, hereditary or otherwise, united in language or dialect recognizing social distance with other tribes or castes. According to Ralph Linton: "tribe is a group of bands occupying a contiguous territory or territories and having a feeling of unity derived from numerous similarities in a culture, frequent contacts and a certain community of interests". L. M. Lewis believes that tribal societies which are small in scale are restricted in the spatial and temporal range of their social, legal and political relations and possess a morality, a religion and world-view of corresponding dimensions. Characteristically too, tribal languages are unwritten and hence the extent of communication both in time and space is inevitably narrow. At the same time, tribal societies exhibit a remarkable economy of design and have a compactness and self-sufficiency lacking in modern society (<http://www.sociologyguide.com/tribal-society/index.php>). In view of such conception, tribes have come to be primarily studied in relation to features and characteristics of the larger society. The focus is on how tribes are getting absorbed into the larger society, the so-called mainstream, by becoming caste, peasant, class and so on. With such conceptualisation, the identity of the tribal group or community is indeed put at risk.

The term 'indigenous people', though of recent coinage at the international level, has been in use in India for a long time. In fact, the social workers, missionaries and political activists have been using the term 'adivasi', the Indian-language term for the indigenous people, freely to refer to the tribal people since the turn of the present century. The term, in conjunction with other related terms such as aborigines, autochthonous, etc, has also been extensively used by scholars and administrators in their writings and reports. The term was used mainly as a mark of identification and differentiation, that is, to mark out a group of people different in physical features, language, religion, custom, social organisation, etc. The term was widely used to refer to the tribal people and was hardly questioned for long period, let alone debated. It is only with the internationalisation of the rights and privileges associated with it that the use of the term indigenous has come to be critically examined or even challenged in the Indian context.

The use of the term 'adivasi' to describe 'tribal people' seems to have some validity even in the sense of their marginalisation from mainstream civilisation. Historical antiquity may have been more distant criteria, but the most immediate and proximate seemed to be the fact that they were *not part of the civilisation*. The aspect of marginalisation was, thus, taken note of while designating a group as 'adivasi'.

- 2) T. B. Naik (<http://www.sociologyguide.com/tribal-society/index.php>) has given the following features of tribes in Indian context.
 - A tribe should have least functional interdependence within the community.
 - It should be economically backward (i.e. primitive means of exploiting natural resources, tribal economy should be at an underdeveloped stage and it should have multifarious economic pursuits).
 - There should be a comparative geographical isolation of its people.
 - They should have a common dialect.
 - Tribes should be politically organized and community panchayat should be influential.
 - A tribe should have customary laws.
- 3) Article 366 (25) of the Constitution of India defines scheduled tribes as such tribes or tribal communities or part of it, or group within such tribes, or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be scheduled tribes for the purpose of this constitution. The scheduled tribe status confers on the tribe, or a part of it, a constitutional status invoking the safeguards provided for in the constitution in their respective States/UTs. The scheduled tribe status is conferred on the basis of birth of a person into a scheduled tribe. According to clause 1 of Article 342, the scheduled tribes are the tribes or tribal communities or part of or a group within these tribes and tribal communities which have been declared as such by the President of India through a public notification. Thus, the President notifies the scheduled tribe in relation to a particular State / Union Territory (UT), and not on an all Indian basis, by an order, after consultation with the state Government concerned. These orders can be modified subsequently, to include or exclude, but through an Act of Parliament under Clause 2 of this Article.
- 4) *De-notified tribes* (DNTs), also known as *vimukta jati*, are the tribes that were originally listed under the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871 as *Criminal Tribes* "addicted

to the systematic commission of non-bailable offences.” Once a tribe became “notified” as criminal, all its members were required to register with the local magistrate, failing which they would be charged with a crime under the Indian Penal Code. The Criminal Tribes Act of 1952 repealed the notification, i.e. ‘denotified’ the tribal communities. This act, however, was replaced by a series of Habitual Offenders Acts, that asked police to investigate a suspect’s criminal tendencies and whether his occupation is “conducive to settled way of life.” The denotified tribes were reclassified as habitual offenders in 1959 (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denotified_tribes_of_India).

- 5) The term ‘Scheduled Areas’ has been defined in the Indian Constitution as “such areas as the President may by order declare to be Scheduled Areas”. Paragraph 6 of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution prescribes the procedure for scheduling, rescheduling and alteration of Scheduled Areas.
- 6) The purpose and advantages of an area being declared as Scheduled Areas are as follows.
 - a) The Governor of a State, which has Scheduled Areas, is empowered to make regulations in respect of the following:
 - i) Prohibit or restrict transfer of land from tribals;
 - ii) Regulate the business of money-lending to the members of Scheduled Tribes. In making any such regulation, the Governor may repeal or amend any Act of Parliament or of the Legislature of the State, which is applicable to the area in question.
 - b) The Governor may by public notification direct that any particular Act of Parliament or of the Legislature of the State shall not apply to a Scheduled Area or any part thereof in the State or shall apply to such area subject to such exceptions and modifications as he may specify;
 - c) The Governor of a State having Scheduled Areas therein, shall, annually or whenever so required by the President of India, make a report to the President regarding the administration of the Scheduled Areas in that State, and the executive power of the Union shall extend to the giving of directions to the State as to the administration of the said area;
 - d) Tribes Advisory Councils (TAC) shall be established in States having Scheduled Areas. A TAC may also be established in any State having Scheduled Tribes, but not Scheduled Areas, on the direction of the President of India. The TAC should consist of not more than twenty members of whom, as nearly as may be, three-fourth should be from the representatives of Scheduled Tribes in the Legislative Assembly of the State. The role of TAC is to advise the State Government on matters pertaining to the welfare and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes in the State, as may be referred to it by the Governor;
 - e) The Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, vide which provisions of Panchayats contained in Part IX of the Constitution, were extended to Scheduled Areas, also contains special provisions for the benefit of Scheduled Tribes.
- 7) The major Scheduled Tribes in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar (& Jharkhand), Madhya Pradesh (& Chhattisgarh) and Orissa are as given below.

State	Names of the Tribes
Andhra Pradesh	Bhil, Chenchu, Gond, Kondas, Lambadis, Sugalis, etc.
Assam	Boro, Kachari, Mikir (Karbi), Lalung, Rabha, Dimasa, Hmar, Hajong, etc
Bihar & (Jharkhand)	Asur, Banjara, Birhor, Korwa, Munda, Oraon, Santhal, etc.
Madhya Pradesh & Chhatisgarh	Bhil, Birhor, Damar, Gond, Kharia, Majhi, Munda, Oraon, Parahi, etc. .
Orissa	Birhor, Gond, Juang, khond, korua, Mundari, Oraon, Santhal, Tharua, etc.

- 8) The four states that have large number of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) are Andhra Pradesh, Bihar (Including Jharakhand), Madhya Pradesh (including Chhattisgarh) and Orissa.

State/UT	Name of P. T. G. Population
Andhra Pradesh	Chenchu, Bodo Gadaba, Gutob Gadaba, Dongria Khond, Kutia, Khond, Kolam, Konda Reddi, Kondasavara, Bondo Porja, Khond Porja, Parengi Porja, Thoti.
Bihar (Including Jharakhand)	Asur (Bihar and Jharkhand), Birhor (Bihar and Jharkhand), Birjia (Bihar and Jharkhand), Hill Kharia (Jharkhand), Korwa (Bihar and Jharkhand), Mal Paharia (Bihar and Jharkhand), Parhaiya (Bihar and Jharkhand), Sauria Paharia (Bihar and Jharkhand), Savar (Bihar and Jharkhand)
Madhya Pradesh (including Chhattisgarh)	Abujh Maria (Chhattisgarh), Baiga (M.P. and Chhattisgarh), Bharia (M.P.), Birhor (Chhattisgarh), Hill Korwa (Chhattisgarh), Kamar (Chhattisgarh), Sahariya (M.P.)
Orissa	Chuktia Bhunjia, Birhor, Bondo, Didayi, Dongria Khond, Juang, Kharia, Kutia Khond, Lanjia Saura, Lodha, Mankirdia, Paudi Bhuyan, Saura.

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UNIT 9 TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT: POLICY AND PROGRAMMES

Structure

- 9.0 Introduction
- 9.1 Objectives
- 9.2 Population Growth of Scheduled Tribes: Demographic Patterns and Trends
 - 9.2.1 Tribes in Indian Censuses Prior to Independence
 - 9.2.2 Tribes in Indian Censuses After Independence
- 9.3 Development and Deprivation of Scheduled Tribes: Important Aspects and Measures
 - 9.3.1 Socio-economic, Cultural and Demographic Features / Behaviour of Scheduled Tribes
 - 9.3.2 Internationally Comparable Measures and Position of Scheduled Tribes
 - 9.3.2.1 Human Development Index (HDI)
 - 9.3.2.2 Gender Equality Index (GEI)
 - 9.3.3 Dimensions of Deprivation of Scheduled Tribes
- 9.4 Constitutional Safeguards for Scheduled Tribes
 - 9.4.1 Educational and Cultural Safeguards
 - 9.4.2 Social Safeguards
 - 9.4.3 Economic Safeguards
 - 9.4.4 Political Safeguards
 - 9.4.5 Service/Employment Safeguards
- 9.5 Broad Approaches to Tribal Development
 - 9.5.1 Isolationist Approach
 - 9.5.2 Assimilationist Approach
 - 9.5.3 Integrationist Approach
 - 9.5.3.1 Protective Measures
 - 9.5.3.2 Promotional Measures
- 9.6 Policies and Programmes for Tribal Development
 - 9.6.1 Special Policy Measures
 - 9.6.1.1 Rights of Forest-Dwelling Tribes on Forest Lands
 - 9.6.2 Programmes for Tribal Development
 - 9.6.2.1 Mainstreaming of Scheduled Tribes: Five Year Plans and Tribal Development
- 9.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 9.8 Answers to 'Check Your Progress' Questions
- 9.9 References

9.0 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding Unit, we discussed the concept, significance, characteristics, types and status of Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Areas. In the present Unit, we will attempt to present the population growth and important aspects of development and deprivation of Scheduled Tribes, broad approaches to their development as well as special measures aimed at protection of their rights and interests including the policies and programmes for their development.

9.1 OBJECTIVES

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

- Describe the demographic patterns and socio-economic and cultural features that reveal the aspects of development and deprivation of Scheduled Tribes;
- Explain the development status of the Scheduled Tribes in comparison with international measures of development;
- Discuss the constitutional safeguards available for protection and promotion of the interests of the Schedule Tribes; and
- Identify and appreciate the policy measures and programmes undertaken by the Government for protection and promotion of the rights and interests of the Scheduled Tribes, and their development with a view to bring them into the national mainstream of development.

9.2 POPULATION GROWTH OF SCHEDULED TRIBES: DEMOGRAPHIC PATTERNS AND TRENDS

India is one of very few non-western countries which have detailed decennial census information available since as back as the 1870s. The census reports and statistical tables have since been presenting demographic information separately for the tribal population, and often for many individual tribes, though it suffers from certain inadequacies such as comparability of data from one census to the other, among other things, thus calling for appropriate caution in drawing conclusions particularly in examining the long-term trends.

9.2.1 Tribes in Indian Censuses Prior to Independence

In this sub-section, we will examine the demographic patterns and trends of Indian Tribes in the Censuses prior to and after independence of India.

In the censuses of British India (except in 1941), religion was one prominent criterion for classification of the country's population, with tribes being categorised as those practising hundreds of different "primitive" religions. In fact, they used to be classified as "*animists*" until the 1931 Census, in which they were enumerated under the heading "*tribal religion*". Thus, up to 1941, the use of religious category in the census enumeration enabled the authorities to bypass many complex issues – anthropological, sociological and historical – involved in the notion and/or identity of diverse tribes across the country. It was only in 1941 that the tribals were defined, for the first time in the history of the Indian census, not in terms of their religion or faith, but their "origin". In fact, this major shift in the criterion of enumeration brought in a serious difficulty of comparability between 1941 and the preceding census enumerations (Davis 1951, Appendix J). Around the time of India's independence, a serious rethinking on the notion of the tribe or tribal identity was initiated by political leaders who wanted to bring tribal and other backward sections gradually through "affection", "friendliness" and some special protection and provisions to the mainstream levels.

The Constitution of India, adopted in 1950, empowered the President of India to declare any tribal community or part thereof as a "scheduled tribe" eligible for those special provisions and benefits. The President promulgated in the same year a list of STs and scheduled areas, which was based, in a large measure, on the list of backward tribes

promulgated in 1936 by the British colonial administration. At the first census of independent India in 1951, the number of scheduled tribal communities or part thereof was 212, with specific areas earmarked for each. The Constitutional provisions, thus, “sealed the boundaries between tribe and non-tribe” and gave to the tribal identity “a kind of definiteness it lacked in the past” (Béteille, 1986: 318). Thus, since the 1950s, there emerged not only a definite tribal identity with legal sanction but also a distinct political interest forging that identity. Without laying down specific criteria for scheduling a tribe, the Constitution has empowered the President of the country to appoint a backward classes commission, with three major tasks: to evaluate conditions of socially backward classes; recommend policy for amelioration of their hardships and deprivations; and re-examine the existing list of STs for suggesting its revision, if necessary. The first such backward classes commission was appointed in 1953, which came up with a recommendation for declaring some additional communities as scheduled. Accordingly, a modified (and enlarged) list of STs was notified by the President in 1956, and the list was published under SCs and STs (Modification) Order, 1956. Consequently, by the 1961 Census, the number of STs rose to 427 (which was an increase by more than twice the number at the 1951 Census), and to 432 by the Census of 1971. Owing to various problems and complaints, the Removal of Area Restrictions (Amendment) Act of 1976 was passed to remove the area restriction on tribal identity, and, henceforth, the list of STs was made applicable to all areas in a state. Consequently, STs began to mean, for all practical purposes, “tribal population” of the country. Difficulties, of course, remained due, *inter alia*, to “the varying definition of a tribe, by changes to the list of officially recognised tribes, by qualitative deficiencies in demographic data, administrative changes to India’s regions and by the reclassification of tribes as castes” (Wiercinski, 1996). But, these possible defects of census data have not usually been so serious as to obliterate the discernible distinctions in demographic features and parameters between the tribal and mainstream populations. The preparation of schedules for tribal and lower caste people had occurred simultaneously. Although there might have been some anomalies in the official recording of these two social identities, this does not preclude the possibility of fruitful and imaginative use of census information (at least) for some specific purposes. In fact, census data do often depict contrasting demographic patterns/outcomes between these two social groups. Unsurprisingly, these two groups do not seem historically to have been much different in terms of economic levels and footings, but they have been pretty distinct socio-culturally. Therefore, it should be illuminating if tribal demographic patterns and trends are examined in comparison with those of the SC population. Understanding tribes in the light of their demographic trends, patterns, and outcomes should provide useful insights into the evolution of the notion of tribes and their relative social position.

We now examine the broad features of long-term growth of the tribal population since the late 19th century, in comparison with the total population (Table 9.1). Except for three decades, namely, 1891-1901, 1911-21 and 1921-31, the aggregate tribal population did register increases. For example, during 1881-91, the enumerated total population increased by about 12%, while the increase recorded for the tribal population was three and half times larger. This could be due to improvements in enumeration coverage of tribal peoples in remote and isolated terrains. However, over the following decade of 1891-1901, the tribal population had experienced a substantial decline in its absolute number vis-à-vis an increase in the total population. This (arguably) reflects a greater mortality toll among the former in the two large scale famines of 1896-97 and 1899-1900. But, in the following decade, 1901-11, the enumerated tribal population had increased much faster than the general population. This could be due to a lessened severity of famines in terms of frequency, scale and coverage, and also (presumably) due to quicker recovery in the post-famine years (e.g. through higher than normal levels

of fertility) of the tribal population, which had suffered a greater (proportionate) population loss in the preceding major famines (Maharatna, 1996: 1-18). Growth of total population was negligible during 1911-21 within which occurred the great influenza pandemic of 1918, causing a heavy toll of human lives including considerable depopulation among tribals also. Again, during 1921-31, Indian tribes appear to have experienced a decline in aggregate population, while there had been an increase in the total population. This differential seems attributable to the heightened politics over religious divisions around the 1931 Census, with, for example, an active political pressure mounting on the authorities to return "everyone of doubtful status as Hindu" (Davis, 1951: 188).

Table 9.1: Long-Term Trends in Population and its Growth and Sex-Ratio, Total and Tribal Populations, India (1881-2001)

Year	Total Population	Tribal Population	Decadal Growth Rate (%)		Sex-Ratio (Female Per 1,000 Males)		
			Total	Tribal	Total	Tribal	
British India							
1881	25,01,55,050	64,26,511 (2.57)	-	-	954	-	
1891	27,95,75,324	91,12,018 (3.26)	11.76	41.79	958	992	
1901	28,38,67,584	81,84,758 (2.88)	1.54	-10.18	972	1,021	
1911	30,30,04,354	95,93,695 (3.17)	6.74	17.21	964	1,016	
1921	30,57,26,528	90,72,024 (3.00)	0.89	-7.2	955	996	
1931	33,76,75,361	76,29,959 (2.45)	10.45	-15.9	950	1,009	
1941	38,89,97,955 ^(a)	87,91,354 ^(b) (2.26)	15.20	6.17	945	985	
Independent India							
1951*	36,10,88,090	1,91,11,498 (5.29)			946	1,021	
1961	43,92,34,771	3,01,30,184	23.10	33.84*	941	987	
1971	54,81,59,652	3,80,15,162 (6.93)	24.80	26.17	930	982	
1981 ^(c)	66,52,87,849	5,16,28,638 (7.76)	24.69	30.6@	934	983	
1991 ^(d)	83,85,83,988	6,77,58,380 (8.08)	23.79	25.68	927	972	
2001	1,02,86,10,328	8,43,26,240 (8.20)	22.7	24.50	933	977	

(a) Includes 23,31,332 persons in North-West Frontier Province not enumerated by religion, but believed to be Muslim. (b) In view of a change in classification in the 1941 Census, this is an estimate – made for the purpose of achieving comparability with the figures of tribal population identified as Animists till 1931 or as people practising tribal religion in 1931 Census – of tribal population in 1941, derived after adjustments to the enumerated population of "tribal origin". See Davis (1951), Appendix J for adjustments and assumptions involved in obtaining this estimate. (c) Excludes Assam. The decadal growth rate during 1971-81 has been calculated by excluding the population of Assam. (d) Excludes Jammu and Kashmir. The decadal growth rate during 1981-91 has been calculated excluding population of both Assam and Jammu and Kashmir. * See note 1 below: + for India and Pakistan together (Visaria 1968, Table 2.9); @ This has been calculated on the basis of revised estimate of tribal population for 1971 (which is 3,94,89,232 excluding Assam) after taking account of the abolition of hitherto imposed area restriction for most tribes by an act of Parliament in 1976, which resulted in larger population of several tribes in many states according to 1971 Census than were actually enumerated (see Sinha 1986, Tables 4.1, 4.2, and Appendix). In fact, the office of the registrar general worked the revised population of tribals for states where the revision was necessary (see commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes 1977; and also Sinha 1993).

(1) In 1951 Census the tribal population was for the first time enumerated according to a statutory list of scheduled tribes notified by the president under Article 342 of the Constitution, which was enlarged through modification as per order in 1956. According to the 1956 Modification order the tribal population for the 1951 Census was revised upward as being 2,25,11,584, with the revised percentage rising to 6.23. Since tribal population in 1961 was enumerated according to the 1956 Modification list of scheduled tribes, the decadal growth rate of tribal population during 1951-61 has been calculated on the basis of this revised tribal population for 1951. (2) Figures in parentheses are respective percentage shares of tribal population to the total population.

Source: For the British India figures, Davis (1951), Table 77, p 179; and Mamoria (1958), p 26; Natarajan (1971), p 9. For post-independence period, see Census Reports, Nag (1984), 15-16; Bose (1996), Government of India (2004).

Furthermore, the shift of criterion from religious affiliation to “tribal origin” as the basis of tribal enumeration in the Census 1941 was (at least partly) responsible for a record of their comparatively slower increase in 1931-41 (Table 9.1). Except for the dramatic effects of famines and epidemics, the enumerated tribal population up to 1921 was growing at rates no less (or may, indeed, be sometimes higher) than those for the total population. The somewhat sluggish recorded increases of the tribal population over the three decades preceding independence could partly be an artifact of social and political turmoil on religious lines. Another noteworthy feature of pre-independence tribal population growth is the somewhat constancy of its proportion to the total since the late 19th century, as against secular declines in the proportion of the Hindus. While the former ranged between 2.26% and 3.26% during 1881-1941, the latter dropped from 75.1% to 9.5% (Davis, 1951: 178). This differential, according to Kingsley Davis, was due to the higher fertility of tribal population than that of the Hindus. But, there could be other possibilities as well. For example, as we argue later, this constancy of the tribal proportion could have resulted from its relatively lower mortality, not from higher fertility vis-à-vis those of the Hindu population.

9.2.2 Tribes in Indian Censuses After Independence

In the first census of independent India in 1951, the enumerated number of tribal people turned out to be more than twice its size in the preceding census, despite the Partition of India in 1947. This might have been partly because the regions (e.g. northwestern parts and eastern Bengal) that were carved out from erstwhile India were historically of low tribal concentration. However, this can hardly be a full explanation, especially when total population of the country declined by about 7% in 1941-51. The clue lies in the fact that enumeration of tribal and lower caste people was made for the first time on the basis of respective statutory schedules prepared and approved by the government. Many persons not considered as “tribals” on the criterion of their religious affiliation and/or otherwise before independence could find themselves so identified in the 1951 Census. Thus, with the decadal growth of enumerated tribal population being higher than that of the total population in the post-independence period, the former’s proportion rose from 5% in 1951 to more than 8% in 2001. Note, however, that the gap in these two recorded growth rates has been the highest during the 1951-61 decade, and it narrowed down over the following decades (perhaps with the exception for the 1971-81 decade). This relative inflation of ST population in the post-independence period does partly reflect expansion of ST list. As Bêteille (1986) observes, “paradoxically, the number of communities deemed to be tribes has increased with the modernisation of India between 1950 and 1976”.

However, fairly rapid enlargement of the list of STs, especially up to the late 1970s and early 1980s, as well as the removal of the area restriction in 1976, account for the extent of the recorded surges in tribal population that took place merely through reclassification, and, hence, of redistribution of the existing population. But, there is the fairly strong evidence suggesting a higher real natural growth of the tribal than that of the total population. While the estimated growth of the “matched populations of STs” between 1961 and 1971 turned out to be only about 1% point lower (25.3% than that 26.2%) based on unadjusted figures, the former happened to be 1% point higher than that of the total population, affirming a higher natural growth rate among tribes vis-à-vis general population in the post-independence period (Sinha, 1986).

What emerges, on the whole (ignoring periods of dramatic losses of population during famines, epidemics and the like), is a picture of the tribal population having grown – much like the general population – at very moderate rates during pre-independence

decades, but at much higher rates thereafter. It is partly because of inclusion of new tribal identities and partly because of late occurrence of their “pre-transition rise” of fertility. However, like total population, the indication of the onset of a declining trend in the growth of tribal population in more recent decades seems well discernible. A broad regional pattern of India’s tribal population – namely, tribes being concentrated (in descending order) in central, eastern (including north-eastern) and western regions (these together constituting about 90% of total tribal population) – has remained largely unchanged. However, there has been a distinct decline of tribal share of eastern states (particularly Bihar and Orissa) in the post-independence period. Notwithstanding possible enumeration biases (e.g. over enumeration of tribals in southern and western regions most prominently up to 1981), the large part of the explanation for the changing pattern of regional composition of the tribal population lies in the interstate differences in real demographic processes, e.g. birth rates, death rates and their trends, patterns of spatial mobility and movements of tribal people (Maharatna, 2005).

Despite the number of STs having already exceeded 500, it is only a few major tribal groups that constitute a large bulk of the aggregate tribal population of the country. Out of these, about nine major tribal groups constitute nearly half of country’s total tribal population, and they are concentrated mostly in the central, western and eastern parts. The tribe-composition has remained broadly unaltered over the post-independence period, notwithstanding proliferation of new tribal sub-groups. For example, relative shares of Bhil and Gond populations have risen, admittedly marginally, with a meagre reduction in the share of Munda population. There are quite a few tribal groups – each constituting (as per 1971 Census count) slightly more than 1% of total tribal population, namely, e.g. Ho (1.42%) in eastern India, Naga (1.23%) in northeastern states (Sinha, 1986). Apart from them, there are numerous smaller tribal groups dispersed across the country. In fact, there are some “small” and so-called primitive tribes of which enumerated populations range from as low as 20. Many of such small tribes are, indeed, on their way towards extinction. However, the phenomenon of so-called “vanishing” tribes, if at all, is extremely localised, and indeed, specific to very small groups situated in very special circumstances. These most vulnerable tribal groups, who currently number around 75, constituting nearly 2% of total tribal population, include Onges, Shompens, the Greater Andamanese, Rajjis Didayis, Hill Korwas and Bondas. An acute food deprivation and extreme vulnerability to death and disease have generally been held responsible for diminution of some small tribal groups in specific locations (Bhagwan, 1997).

Table 9.2: Growth of Population and Growth of Numerically Large Tribes, India (1941-81)

**Tribal Development:
Policy and Programmes**

Tribe	Regions of Habitation	Population				Average Annual Growth Rate (%)		
		1941#	1961	1971	1981**	1941-61	1961-71	1971-81
Bhil	Gujarat, MP and Rajasthan	23,30,270 (9.2)	38,36,308 (12.8)	51,82,625 (13.6)	73,92,983 (14.3)	3.23	3.51	4.26
Gond	MP, Orissa, AP and Maharashtra	32,01,004 (12.6)	39,91,767 (13.4)	48,09,165 (12.7)	73,87,376 (14.3)	1.24	2.05	5.36
Santal	Bihar, Orissa, WB and Tripura	27,32,266 (10.7)	31,54,107 (10.5)	36,33,459 (9.6)	42,60,842 (8.3)	0.77	1.52	1.73
Oraon	Bihar, MP, Orissa and WB	11,22,926 (4.4)	14,47,429 (4.8)	17,06,091 (4.5)	18,65,779 (3.6)	1.44	1.80	0.94
Mina	Rajasthan	-	11,55,916 (3.9)	15,33,513 (4.0)	20,86,692 (4.0)	-	3.27	3.61
Munda	Bihar, Orissa, WB, MP	7,06,869 (2.8)	10,19,098 (3.4)	11,63,338 (4.0)	14,22,830 (2.8)	2.21	1.42	2.23
Khond	AP, Orissa	7,44,904 (2.9)	8,45,981 (2.8)	9,11,835 (2.4)		0.68	0.78	
Boro@	Assam, WB, Tripura	5,94,979 (2.3)	3,51,583			-2.05		
Varli			3,74,184					

** (Roy Burman 1993: 199); the percentage shares have been calculated by the author on the total tribal population of India (exclusive of Assam).

AP - Andhra Pradesh; MP - Madhya Pradesh; WB - West Bengal. Figures in parentheses are respective per cent shares to total tribal population.

@ Boro-kacharis: # These are 1941 Census enumerations of specific tribes on the criterion of "tribal origin" (rather than tribal religion used in 1931 and before). Therefore, the respective shares of tribal groups have been calculated on total enumerated tribal population of 25, 441, 548, which is much larger than adjusted figure of 87,91,354 as presented in Table 9.1

Source: Roy Burman (1993: 199); Government of India (1961). Report of the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission, Vol 1, 1960-1961, p 7; Sinha (1986), Table 4.3, p 47.

Some data on the literacy dropout ratios, health and other indicators related to STs presented in the following Tables is self-explanatory and provide us some understanding of their development.

Table 9.3: Secondary School Dropout Ratios

	ST	All	Gap
1996-97	84.2	70.0	14.2
2003-04	80.3	62.6	17.7
Decrease in 2003-04 over 1996-97	3.9	7.4	+3.5

Source: 1) Planning Commission. 2005. *Report of the Task Group on Development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, On Selected Items of the National Common Minimum Programme*, Table 2.4. New Delhi: Government of India.

2) Sarkar Sandip, Mishra Sunil, and Dayal Harishwar, Dev Nathan. 2006. Development and Deprivation of Scheduled Tribes, *Economic and Political Weekly*, November, pp.4824-4827.

Table 9.4: Status of STs in Key Health Indicators (1998-99)

Indicator	ST	All	Percent Difference between ST and All
Infant Mortality	82.4	67.6	24.5
Neo-natal Mortality	53.3	43.4	22.8
Child Mortality	46.3	29.3	58.0
Under-five Mortality	126.6	94.9	33.4
ANC Check-up	56.5	65.4	13.6
Percent Institutional deliveries	17.1	33.6	49.1
Percent women in Anaemia	64.9	51.8	25.2
Percent children undernourished (weight for age)	55.9	47.0	18.7
Full immunization	26.4	42.0	37.1

- Source:** 1) NFHS (1998-1999) quoted in Planning Commission. 2005. *Report of the Task Group on Development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, On Selected Items of the National Common Minimum Programme*. Table 2.11. New Delhi: Government of India.
- 2) Sarkar Sandip, Mishra Sunil, and Dayal Harishwar, Dev Nathan. 2006. Development and Deprivation of Scheduled Tribes, *Economic and Political Weekly*, November, pp.4824-4827.

Table 9.5: Percentage of Households Having Access to Electricity

Census	All	ST	Gap
1991	42.4	22.8	19.6
2001	55.8	36.5	19.3

- Source:** 1) Planning Commission. 2005. *Report of the Task Group on Development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, On Selected Items of the National Common Minimum Programme*, Table 2.15. New Delhi: Government of India.
- 2) Sarkar Sandip, Mishra Sunil, and Dayal Harishwar, Dev Nathan. 2006. Development and Deprivation of Scheduled Tribes, *Economic and Political Weekly*, November, pp.4824-4827.

Table 9.6: Percentage of Households Having Improved Drinking Water Facility

Census	All	ST	Gap
1991	64.1	43.2	20.9
2001	79.2	61.7	17.8

- Source:** 1) Planning Commission. 2005. *Report of the Task Group on Development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, On Selected Items of the National Common Minimum Programme*, Table 2.18. New Delhi: Government of India.
- 2) Sarkar Sandip, Mishra Sunil, and Dayal Harishwar, Dev Nathan. 2006. Development and Deprivation of Scheduled Tribes, *Economic and Political Weekly*, November, pp.4824-4827.

The “vanishing tribes” phenomenon, of course, deserves an attention and an effective public action in its own right, but it is important to keep in mind that the former does not represent the aggregate tribal situation in India. In fact, the major tribal groups (except some small vanishing ones) are not experiencing a uniform positive rate of population growth. While Bhil and Gond, dominant central and western tribes, have had accelerating population growth since the early 1960s, Santals, Mina and Munda, who are mostly eastern tribes, have fared far less in terms of population increase (Table 9.2). For example, the population of Katkari, an originally nomadic tribe of Konkan region of Maharashtra, has been almost stationary during 1961-71 in the face of nearly 2.3% average annual growth rate of aggregate tribal population in the state (Kulkarni, 2002). While this could well be related to acute material deprivation, other possibilities (e.g. effect of removal of area restriction) cannot be ruled out. For example, among the major tribes of central and western states (e.g. Bhil, Gond, Mina), growth of population has been above the national average and even accelerated in the post-independence period, at least up to the 1980s. This rapid growth of tribal population, especially over several decades since independence, seems to have caused inter alia by a relatively late occurrence of modern improvements in mortality of tribal population, and (somewhat related) by “pre-transition fertility rises” consequent upon generally sluggish pace of modernisation across tribal communities. In contrast, the major tribes of eastern India (e.g. Santal, Orao, Munda, Khond) have registered much smaller population increase vis-à-vis both general population in this region and tribes of western and central India. A relatively larger under-enumeration of tribal people in this region, especially in the late 1970s, could be a factor, since official recognition of tribal identity on the basis of “area restrictions” continued here for some time even after latter’s formal repeal in 1976 (Roy Burman, 1993: 200). But, this cannot constitute a complete explanation. A relative mortality disadvantage and comparatively low fertility among these tribes (vis-à-vis those of central and western India) are also likely to have been contributors – especially over the recent past. Furthermore, specific historical factors might have made major east Indian tribes relatively prone to long distance migration and movement (e.g. Roy Burman, 1993: 201-02). In sum, *three major tribal groups, namely, Bhil, Santal, Gond constitute nearly 40% of the country’s total tribal population*, and this numeric dominance of just a few major tribes amidst hundreds of tiny groups and sub-groups has been continuing for a long time past, leaving aggregative analysis of India’s tribal population useful and credible. Perhaps, the most glaring difference between tribal and general populations lies in the sex ratio, i.e. female-male ratio (FMR hereafter) (Table 9.1). In distinct contrast to India’s overall FMR being unfavourable to females, it has been relatively balanced among tribes. In fact, females outnumber males in the entire western world and in many developing countries outside Asia and north Africa. Such excess female scenario derives both from females’ biological edge over males in natural survival chances as well as from their relative mortality advantage in wars, accidents and lifestyles. Thus, a huge deficiency of females, as indicated by low FMR in general population, reflects adverse social influences outweighing females’ intrinsic (biological) advantage in survival.

There have been several attempts at estimating what Amartya Sen famously coined “missing women” in countries with lower than a “benchmark” FMR, which generally obtains in the absence of anti-female social environment. The estimated figure of about 37 million missing women in India, obtainable from the use of sub-Saharan FMR of 1.022 as a benchmark, provides a broad sense of how many more females could remain alive if anti-female social environment were absent. A long-term deteriorating trend in FMR among India’s general population since the early 20th century (see Table 9.1) has been a source of concern in academic and official circles alike. After several

decades of discussions and research, a few stark facts have emerged almost indisputably in the Indian context: a) that low overall FMR in total population is largely related to a female mortality disadvantage (vis-à-vis males), especially in infancy and young childhood; b) that this relative female disadvantage is a manifestation of familial discrimination and neglect mostly against girls in respect of distribution of resources, especially medical attention and healthcare; c) apart from worsening relative share of females in the distribution of benefits of modern improvements in health and medical facilities, there are indications of intensification – along with overall development and a large-scale transition to lower fertility regime – of anti-female biases, often more selectively against higher parity daughters born already or abortion of high parity female foetus. Finally, the above anti-female outcomes are generally traced to a pervasive culture of “son preference” or a gender bias (i.e. preference for sons over daughters), which is a prominent expression of fundamental Asian cultural, and patriarchal values in which female status and autonomy is relatively low.

Against these disquieting (and even perhaps growing) imbalances in FMR of India's general population, the tribal record of a more balanced sex-ratio is of considerable interest (Table 9.1). This implies, a much lesser anti-female discrimination (especially, against female infants and children) in tribal societies vis-à-vis general population, an implication which is often supported by related research and evidence (e.g. Agnihotri, 2000: 153). Besides, there exists a substantial anthropological evidence elucidating relatively little (or perhaps almost total absence of) gender bias in traditional tribal society and culture. In this context, a 10-point drop of tribal FMR from 983 to 972 during 1981-91 decade is particularly noteworthy, pointing to the plausibility of tribal trend in the direction of the mainstream pattern of growing deficit of females.

With all this as background, we now turn to a comparative evaluation of India's aggregate tribes vis-à-vis non-tribal groups in terms of broad socio-economic and cultural indicators as well as some key demographic outcomes and behaviour over a long time span.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under “Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’ Questions.”

1) What are the positive aspects of demographic trends and patterns of tribal situation?

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9.3 DEVELOPMENT AND DEPRIVATION OF SCHEDULED TRIBES: IMPORTANT ASPECTS AND MEASURES

In this sub-section, we will focus our discussion on development and deprivation of Scheduled Tribes based on certain parameters, viz. i) Socio-economic, cultural and demographic features / behaviour, and ii) Internationally comparable standard measures.

9.3.1 Socio-economic, Cultural and Demographic Features / Behaviour of Scheduled Tribes

While a substantial body of empirical and ethnographical literature on the socio-cultural features of India's diverse tribal peoples exists, the task of collating and studying the former's influences on demographic outcomes has relatively rarely been taken up. The summary information shows some details on socio-economic, cultural, demographic features separately for STs, SCs and others at all-India level at four points of time spanning over a century since the early 1900s. Unfortunately, information on socio-economic parameters separately for social groups is unavailable for the early 1900s. During the 1970s, the ST and SC groups do not appear to have been vastly different in terms of socio-economic footing defined by such indicators as income, consumption, asset possessions, poverty and occupation (Table 9.3)

Table 9.3: Long-term Trend in Select Socio-Economic, Demographic and Socio-Cultural Indicators of Tribal and Non-Tribal populations, India (Early 1900s to Early 2000s)

	Scheduled Tribes				Scheduled Castes				Other			
	Early (1901-21)	Early 1970s	Early 1990s	Early 2000s	Early (1901-21)	Early 1970s	Early 1990s	Early 2000s	Early (1901-21)	Early 1970s	Early 1990s	Early 2000s
Socio-economic indicators												
% share in population (rural) (NSS)	—	9.2 ^a	10.8	10.6	—	16.8 ^a	21.1	20.9	—	55.8 ^b	54.8 ^b	
% share in land (NSS) (rural)	—	10.1 ^a	11.7	11.15	—	7.9 ^a	10.3	9.04	—	82.0 ^b	78.0	79.8
Area owned per household (ha) (rural)	—	—	1.05	0.767	—	—	0.50	0.304	—	—	1.01	1.76
% of farm labourers to total main workers	—	33.0	32.7	28.5	—	51.8	49.1	39.2	—	20.2	20.0	31.3
% of landless households	—	17.1 ^a	13.3	7.2	—	12.6 ^a	20.4	10.0	—	10.2 ^a	11.2	
Per capita consumption expenditure (rural) (Rs)	—	87.2 ^a	123.0 ^{**}	857.5	—	94.3 ^a	133.1 ^{**}	758.4	—	129.0 ^a	169.2 ^{**}	2177.0
% below poverty line (rural)	—	67.2 ^a	50.2	44.7	—	61.6 ^a	48.3	37.1	—	43.1 ^a	30.0	21.2
(% share to total rural poor)	—	—	[10.8]	[16.9]	—	—	[27.7]	[27.7]	—	—	[44.7]	[41.5]
% literate (5+ years)	—	11.4	23.6	24.35	—	14.7	30.1	45.19	—	33.8	47.7	64.8 ^c
Demographic Indicators												
TFR (average children born to women aged 40-49 years)	40 ^b	4.1 ^a	3.6	3.1	—	4.8 ^a	3.9	2.9	50 ^b	4.5 ^a	3.3	2.5
(CER)			[4.8]	[4.6]			[5.4]	[4.5]			[4.8]	[3.8]
Crude Death Rate	38.6 ^b	14.7 ^a	9.0	—	—	16.2 ^a	13.0	—	14.5 ^a	11.7 ^a	11.0	6.4 ^c
IMR (survival ratio of children)§	[790] ^b	101.1 ^a	88	43.8	—	126.5 ^a	84	50.7	[112] ^b	99.2 ^a	74	39.2
Gender-relations/female autonomy												
Sexratio (f/m)	1010	987	972	979	—	935	922	935	900 ^b	930 ^b	927 ^b	933 ^b
Female Age at marriage (years)	17	16.4	17.1	18.4	—	14.9	16.1	17.6	11.1	15.4 ^b	17.4 ^b	18.3 ^b
Number unmarried per 1,000 women aged 40-45	23.1 ^a	—	—	1.4	—	—	—	1.3	11.0 ^b	—	—	1.6 ^c

^a Estimated by indirect methods by the author (Maharatna 2005); ^b Hindu; ^c number of children surviving per 1,000 born to families with completed fertility in 1921.

^a Central Provinces/Berar; ^b 1911-21; ^c 1982; ^d early 1980s; ^e Hindu Non-STs; ^f 1978; ^g all; ^h a 2008; CER= crude birth rate per 1,000; IMR= Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 births; ^{**} 1987-88; Literacy rate relates to age 7+; Unmarried women relates to age 50+.

Sources: World Fact Book; Census of India 2001, *Marital Status and Age at Marriage*; Census of India 2001, *Social and Cultural Tables*; C-8, SC and ST, Government of India 2008, New Delhi NSS 55th Round, July-June 2004-05; NSS 59th Round, January-December 2003; www.indiastat.com/data/; GOI, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, India 2008; Central Statistical Organisation, *Statistical Abstract of India 2005-2006*; CSO 2006, *Selected Socio-economic Statistics of India, 2006*; Government of India, New Delhi; Census of India 2001, *Marital Status and Age at Marriage*; An Analysis of 2001 Census Data; Census of India 2001, *Social and Cultural Tables*, C-8, SC and ST; K. Surinam and S.D. Tendulkar, 'Poverty among Social and Economic Groups in India in the 1990s', Working Paper 118, Centre for Development Economics, Delhi School of Economics; International Institute for Population Sciences, *National Family Health Survey, 1992-93, 1998-99*; Thorat (2006); Das (2010).

Source: Maharatna Arup, 2011. How Can Beautiful Be Backward? Tribes of India in a Long- Term Demographic Perspective, *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol. XLVI, No.4.

In fact, the ST population appear to own larger land per household than the SC counterparts do on the whole; while the proportion of total land owned by STs is pretty close to their relative share in total population, the share of land belonging to the SCs is far less than their relative population size. However, the more balanced land-man ratio among the overall tribes does not translate necessarily into their relatively higher agricultural incomes vis-à-vis SCs, since the former belong often to infertile, semi-arid, hilly, and forested terrains with extremely low agricultural productivity. Notably, per capita consumption expenditures of these two groups – though both being much lower than that of the non-SC/ST group – have not been hugely different. Likewise, the STs, according to large-scales ample survey results until recently (at least up to the mid-1970s), do not appear vastly more inflicted by income-poverty than the latter.

However, more lately, the pace of poverty reduction has been distinctly slower among the STs vis-à-vis SCs and others, reflecting a systematic (relative) disadvantage of tribal people in reaping the benefits from the poverty-alleviation programmes (e.g. employment guarantee schemes) (Mukhopadhyay and Rajaraman, 2007). More specifically, on the matter of two key human needs, namely, health and education, tribals appear clearly most deprived, with their extremely limited access to hospitals, medical doctors, medicines, and schools in comparison with even aggregate SC population (Tables 9.3 and 9.4; for more details see Maharatna, 2005). What appears in this context, rather striking, is comparatively lower mortality levels among the tribes vis-à-vis Hindu mainstream population in the historical past e.g. in the early 20th century (See Table 9.3). Several considerations and related historical evidence do lend support to the plausibility of a relative mortality and health advantage of the tribes (particularly in infancy and childhood ages) in the past. For example, prolonged breast-feeding and early start of food supplement for infants – both of which are now widely known to be favourable to infant and early childhood survival – have been prominent traditional but healthy practices in tribal communities. A few other comparatively good features relating to infant and childcare practices in tribal cultures vis-à-vis mainstream (non-tribal) include the custom of holding infants and children vertically while awake and a close physical contact with mothers (Konner, 1976). Furthermore, tribal females historically used to marry on average about four years later than the Hindu counterparts. In fact, since child marriage is not practised in traditional tribal communities this could have been a contributor to the comparative mortality advantage of tribal infants, as infants of very young mothers run a higher risk of death. Comparatively greater autonomy and command of tribal females over intra-household resources might have contributed to a relatively better nutritional levels of tribal children vis-à-vis non-tribal counterparts historically. Indeed, global evidence (especially prior to the age of large-scale use of antibodies and vaccines) shows that communities which used to live in less crowded settlements and in great intimacy with natural environments (e.g. forests and hills) fared relatively better in mortality terms (Wirsing, 1985). This might have been true of India's tribal people too in the past when their main settlements were not only in mountainous, hilly and forested tracts, but their secluded circumstances left them with lesser chances of exposure to contamination and disease transmission. Similarly, plausible is their relative efficiency/ advantage in using effective indigenous herbs/medicines for illness treatment (vis-à-vis non-tribal mainstream) in the pre-modern period of epidemiology and medical sciences. Besides, tribal people – partly because of these healthy aspects of their habitation, and partly due to their isolation from mainstream population – were perhaps less severely inflicted by epidemics. For example, the mortality effect of the great influenza pandemic of 1918 was found relatively less pronounced among pygmies and bush-men, as compared to other populations of the Kalahari desert (Dornan, 1975: 141). The elevation of tribal mortality through contamination and disease transmission from the mainstream is often seen as one negative outcome of their growing contact, assimilation and integration (Mamoria 1958: 48). A few more reasons can be adduced for explaining relative mortality advantage of India's tribal population in the past. For example, the malaria, which had remained almost the largest killer, particularly prior to the second world war, might have been somewhat less in tribal habitations in high altitude with relative dryness. Tribals' greater dependence on spring waters, lesser density and crowding might have exerted mitigating influences on the incidence of diarrhoeal and respiratory diseases among them. Indeed, this historical evidence of relative mortality advantage of India's tribal infants and children tallies with what is often observed for foraging/tribal communities globally: "foraging societies experience relatively low levels of infant and child mortality due to synergistic effects of nutritional patterns yielding adequate growing and maintenance requirements and a relatively low incidence of

infectious disease” (Handwerker, 1983: 15). In any case, it is of interest to know as to whether the historical superiority of some aspects of tribal demographic regime waned over time along with modernisation, development, integration and cultural assimilation.

Tribal females’ nuptial features in the past – namely, marrying (relatively) late and only after “maturity” and mostly, on self-chosen basis, freedom to divorce, remarry and remain celibate – are reasonably reliable pointer to a relatively high status and autonomy that tribal women had enjoyed historically. While this (with its implication for lower or negligible degree of “son preference”) should have bred a motivation for comparatively low tribal fertility in the historical past, the latter could have been achieved more directly by tribals’ several fertility-inhibiting socio-cultural practices and taboos (such as relatively long durations of breastfeeding and child-spacing, postpartum sexual abstinence, indigenous methods of abortion and contraception). A more patriarchal society is widely known to be relatively favourable to high fertility, as women lack both autonomy in fertility decision/control and economic security. Indeed, empirical studies often confirm an inverse relationship between female autonomy and fertility – albeit mostly for mainstream society (Dharmalingam and Morgan, 1996; Morgan and Niraula, 1995; Malhotra et al, 1995; and Basu, 1992). Although comparative studies of tribes are remarkably rare, there is a distinct evidence – especially up to the early 1990s – suggesting lower level of overall fertility in aggregate ST population than that of the non-tribal counterparts, particularly SC people.

However, the more recent scenario of the overall tribal demographic regime appears more complicated and varied owing to the mounting complexities of existence and related vulnerabilities. The current changes in fertility among tribes, of late, has made their fertility turn to be higher than even the SC’s level (Table 9.8). Apropos mortality, the past (relative) superiority of overall tribal population (particularly in childhood years) has been subsequently eroded, and indeed, even reversed in the recent past (Maharatna, 2005). For example, as per the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) – 3, 2005-06 information, childhood (one-four years of age) mortality turns out to be the highest among STs vis-à-vis SCs and others, although tribal relative advantage in infant mortality vis-à-vis SCs still shows up (Das, et al, 2010). This reflects changing production organisation in tribal economy and its resource base, and direct evidence of female discrimination at the household level (e.g. sex-differential in mortality, nutritional status, medical attention) seems to be already surfacing in tribal communities – of course, in varying pace across diverse locations (Subhadra and Rahul, 1997). This is clearly a manifestation of contemporary forces shaping the tribal trends of taking increasingly to the mainstream (Hindu) socio-cultural traditions in the gender role/relations and sometimes to the conservative Christian influences (Xaxa, 2004). A recent study, noting this “sharp” drop in tribal FMR, remarks, “the patriarchal norms of the higher castes, and Sanskritisation and de-tribalisation are similarly assimilating tribal people into a national culture of discrimination against girls and women” (Atkins, et al, 2000, p. 199). Similarly, Berreman (1993, p.388) describes the effects of Sanskritisation as being especially damaging to females because it encourages and enforces patriliney (in both descent and inheritance), patri-locality, early marriage and widow celibacy, limitation of divorce to male initiative, dowry marriage, preference for or favouring of male children, male ownership of virtually all property (especially, productive property), low priority to female education, literacy and even health, earning power restricted to males, isolation of social and physical mobility largely to males, and total economic, political and social dependence of females on males. Thus, it is not that anti-female ramifications of the acculturation processes for tribal societies escaped attention of previous researchers, but our present aggregate analysis of demographic trends and features of overall tribes, in conjunction with their broad socio-cultural underpinnings, has reaffirmed or rather established this connection on a firmer footing.

Nevertheless, the long-term trend of growth has not been remarkably different between tribal and general populations, except for periods of historically contingent events (e.g. famines and epidemics) – the overall picture of the tribal population is one of a steady increase.

9.3.2 Internationally Comparable Measures and Position of Scheduled Tribes

The UNDP's representations of human development and deprivation encapsulated in the human development index (HDI), human poverty index (HPI), gender development index (GDI) and gender empowerment measure (GEM) have now become standard measures in development discussion. These indices are generally calculated at the country level and also at the sub-country or state and provincial levels. These indices are calculated for a specific socio-economic group, the scheduled tribes (STs). The purpose of this exercise is to compare the indices for the STs vis-à-vis all-India averages, and also to place the STs of India in a global context with regard to development and deprivation (Sarkar, et al, 2006).

The STs in India are a legal category, roughly coinciding with those who are adivasis. There are some, like the tea garden workers in Assam, who should be but are not listed among the STs. But, more or less, one can take STs to correspond with indigenous peoples in the international vocabulary. The database for this study identifies STs as one of the social groups and a large part of official data is disaggregated by some, though not all, social groups. The other important social group for which such data is disaggregated is that of the scheduled castes (SCs) or dalits. In such study, we will sometimes compare STs with SCs. The "other" is the population minus the STs and SCs, i.e. "other than SC and ST". They, however, do not form a homogeneous social group. This category not only includes the upper (or forward) castes but also the middle castes or backward castes (BCs) and religious minorities. Finally, the terms "all" and "all-India" refer to the whole population (Ibid).

9.3.2.1 Human Development Index (HDI)

The HDI is a composite index representing three dimensions of human development, viz, economic, educational and health. The indicators for these dimensions are: per capita monthly expenditure adjusted for inequality; a combination of literacy rate and intensity of formal education; and a combination of life expectancy at age one and infant mortality, respectively.

Our HDI of 0.504 is close to UNDP's HDI of 0.514. With India in the medium-income, medium human development category, where do the STs come in? The UNDP's HDI uses per capita GDP, with purchasing power-parity (US\$). Since Indian income figures are not available for social groups, we followed the Planning Commission's use of inequality-adjusted per capita consumption. This, however, makes it difficult to make direct comparisons between our HDI for STs and that of UNDP. However, on some broad comparable statements, there is a considerable difference between the all-India HDI and the HDI for STs. The difference of about 30 per cent would put the STs in a different category in international comparisons. *They would firmly be in the low-human development category*, which includes sub-Saharan Africa, as against the middle-human development status of all-India. Further, the STs of Orissa, already a state with low human development in India, would fall to the bottom of the list of HDIs of sub-Saharan African countries. In case of the HPI, the major difference between the Planning Commission's and UNDP's method is the use of the national and state poverty lines versus the \$1 per day per capita to indicate poverty in income. However, we can

be confident that the roughly 30 per cent difference between all-India and ST HPI is not an overestimation (Ibid).

9.3.2.2 Gender Equality Index (GEI)

As one would expect, the GEI among STs at 80.2 per cent is higher than it is for all-India at 69.1 per cent. Of course, the GEI as calculated here, following the Planning Commission's methodology, is very limited. Its three variables are: *economic attainment*, as measured by the worker population ratio; *health attainment*, as measured by life expectancy at age one and infant mortality; and *educational attainment*, as measured by the literacy rate of those above the age of six and the intensity of formal education respectively. All three variables are given equal weight in the calculation of the GEI. The high rate of ST female workforce participation, compared to all-India female workforce participation, makes the ST GEI somewhat higher than that for all-India. However, the high rate of ST female workforce participation does not say anything about the quality of that workforce participation (Ibid).

9.3.3 Dimensions of Deprivation of Scheduled Tribes

Now, we look at a few dimensions of deprivation among the STs, taking up only those aspects that can be seen from nation-wide statistics. Overall, in literacy, the gap between STs and "others" has reduced from 1991 to 2001. Further, the decrease in dropout ratios over this period shows an improvement in completion in all categories of school education. However, in the important area of secondary school education, the gap between STs and "all" has gone up from 14.2 to 17.7 percentage points, while the dalits (SCs) are closing this gap. The ST and all-India difference is greater for under-five mortality than it is for infant mortality. The reasons for this may lie in a number of factors – low birth-weight, greater incidence of malnutrition, lower immunisation, lesser access to safe drinking water, and infrastructure including roads and lower levels of women's education. Infrastructure is largely a matter of state provision rather than one of per capita income or consumption. The ST areas are under-provided compared to the rest of the country in terms of roads, electricity and health infrastructure (Ibid).

Does self-governance make a difference to development outcomes? Some of the Indian scheduled tribes now have states that they largely administer themselves, to the extent that there can be such self-governance within the ambit of the Indian politico-economic system. These are some of the states of north-east India – Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh. Important to consider here is: Does such self-governance make a difference to the development outcomes? Due to the lack of data we are unable to calculate the HDI and HPI for these states. However, data on some of the variables used in those indices are available. So as to be able to compare these outcomes with those of STs at an all-India level we can take a look at Table 9.3.

Table 9.3: Comparing Self-Governing ST States with All India ST

Indicators	All India ST	Arunachal Pradesh	Meghalaya	Mizoram	Nagaland
Literacy (2001)	47.1	49.6	61.3	89.3	65.9
Infant Mortality (1998-99)	84.2	63.1	89.0	37.0	42.1
Child Mortality (1998-99)	46.3	37.4	36.2	18.4	22.7
Any Anaemia among Women (1998-99)	64.9	62.5	63.3	48.0	38.4
Vaccination against Measles	34.3	33.6	17.7	71.0	19.6
Children undernourished (weight for age)	55.9	24.3	37.9	27.7	24.1

- Source:** 1) Planning Commission. 2005. *Report of the Task Group on Development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, On Selected Items of the National Common Minimum Programme*. New Delhi: Government of India.
- 2) Sarkar Sandip, Mishra Sunil, and Dayal Harishwar, Dev Nathan. 2006. Development and Deprivation of Scheduled Tribes, *Economic and Political Weekly*, November, pp.4824-4827.

Arunachal Pradesh does better than all-India ST in four indicators, and is around the all-India level in two indicators. Meghalaya does better than all-India ST in three indicators, is at all-India level in two and worse than the all-India level in one indicator. Mizoram is better than all-India ST in all indicators and that too by a wide margin. Nagaland is better than all-India ST in four out of five indicators but worse off only in one, vaccination against measles.

Mizoram and Nagaland are clearly superior to all-India ST levels. What is surprising is that Meghalaya, the oldest of these states, does not match the performance of Mizoram and Nagaland. Is it that the administrations in the latter two states are more responsive than in the former to meeting the needs of the people of the state?

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under "Answers to 'Check Your Progress' Questions."

2) What are the important aspects of development and deprivation of Scheduled Tribes based on their socio-economic and cultural features?

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3) What are the important aspects of development and deprivation of Scheduled Tribes based on international measures?

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9.4 CONSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS FOR SCHEDULED TRIBES

In this section, we will make a mention of special safeguards that the Constitution provides for protection and promotion of the rights and the interests of the Scheduled Tribes.

9.4.1 Educational and Cultural Safeguards

Following Articles of the Constitution provide educational and cultural safeguards for the Scheduled Tribes.

- **Article 15(4):** It empowers the State to make any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for SCs and STs.
- In **Article 16(4)** also the term 'backward classes' is used as a generic term and comprises various categories of backward classes, viz. Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, and De-notified Communities.
- **Article 29:** It provides for protection of interests of minorities which includes STs.
- **Article 46:** It states that "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".
- **Article 347:** It makes special provision relating to language spoken by a section of the population of a state which includes the languages of the Scheduled Tribes as well.
- **Article 350:** It provides for use of their language in representations for redress of their grievance and also the right to conserve distinct language, script or culture.
- **Article 350A:** It provides for instruction in their mother tongue at primary stage of education.
- **Article 350B:** It provides for special officer for linguistic minorities.

9.4.2 Social Safeguards

The social safeguards include the following.

- **Article 23:** It prohibits traffic in human beings and begging and other similar forms of forced labour and provides that any contravention of this provision shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law. Though it does not specifically mention Scheduled Tribes it includes them as well.
- **Article 24:** It forbids child labour. It provides that no child below the age of 14 years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment. Since substantial portion of child-labour engaged in hazardous jobs belong to weaker sections including the Scheduled Tribes it has great significance to these groups.

9.4.3 Economic Safeguards

The provisions of Articles 23, 24 and 46 mentioned above also form part of the economic safeguards for the Scheduled Tribes, among others.

- In addition to the above, **Article 244** states that the provisions of Fifth Schedule shall apply to the administration and control of the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes in any State other than the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura. These States are covered under Sixth Schedule, under Clause (2) of this Article.
- **Article 275:** It provides for Grants in-Aid to the specified States (STs and SAs) as covered under Fifth and Sixth Schedules of the Constitution.

9.4.4 Political Safeguards

There are adequate constitutional safeguards such as the following, among others, that protect and promote the political interests of the Scheduled Tribes.

- **Article 164(1):** It makes a special provision for Tribal Affairs Ministers in the States of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa.
- **Article 243:** It provides for reservation of seats in Panchayats.
- **Article 330:** It provides for reservation of seats for STs in Lok Sabha.
- **Article 334:** It originally laid down that the provisions relating to the reservation of seats for SCs/STs in the Lok Sabha and State Vidhan Sabhas (and the representation of the Anglo-Indian community in the Lok Sabha and the State Vidhan Sabhas) would cease to have effect on the expiration of a period of ten years from the commencement of the Constitution. This Article has been amended five times, extending the said period by ten years on each occasion. This provision will now expire in January 2020.
- **Article 337:** It provides for reservation of seats for STs in State Legislatures.
- **Article 371:** It makes special provisions for protection of the Schedule Tribes in different States including those in the North-East region.

9.4.5 Service/Employment Safeguards

Following Articles provide for reservation for STs in Government employment.

- **Article 16(4):** It empowers the State to make “any provision for the reservation in appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens which, in the opinion of the State, is not adequately represented in the services under the State”. It includes STs as well.
- **Article 16(4A):** It provides that nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from making any provision for reservation in matters of promotion, “with consequent seniority” to any class or classes of posts in the services under the State in favour of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes which, in the opinion of the State, are not adequately represented in the services under the State.
- **Article 16(4B):** It specifies that nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from considering any unfilled vacancies of a year which are reserved for being filled up in that year in accordance with any provision for reservation made under clause (4) or clause (4A) as a separate class of vacancies to be filled up in any succeeding year or years and such class of vacancies shall not be considered together with the vacancies of the year in which they are being filled up for determining the ceiling of fifty percent reservation on total number of vacancies of that year.
- **Article 320(4):** It provides that nothing in clause (3) shall require a Public Service Commission to be consulted as respects the manner in which any provision under Article 16(4A) may be made or the manner in which effect may be given to the provisions of Article 335.
- **Article 335:** It mentions that the claims of the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes shall be taken into consideration, consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration, in making the appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State.

Provided that nothing in this Article shall prevent in making of any provision in favor of members of SCs and STs for relaxation in qualifying marks in any examination or lowering the standards of evaluation, for reservation in matters of promotion to any class or classes of services or posts in connection with affairs of the Union or of a State (Added by the Constitutional 82nd Amendment Act, 2000).

The constitutional safeguards presented above are not exhaustive and other specific provisions related to many other specific contexts as are available will also apply for protection and promotion of their interests.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under “Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’ Questions.”

4) What are the political safeguards for the Scheduled Tribes available in the Constitution?

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5) What are the important service/employment safeguards available for the Scheduled Tribes in the Constitution?

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9.5 BROAD APPROACHES TO TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

In a democratic state, one group of people should not remain outside the mainstream society. Brief account of tribal population distribution speaks about the need and significance of bringing them into the mainstream.

A Brief Account of the Geographic Distribution of the Scheduled Tribe Population in India: Out of the total Scheduled Tribe population of 67.76 million, about 49% of the Scheduled Tribe population lives in three states, viz. Madhya Pradesh (27.73%), Maharashtra (10.80%) and Orissa (10.38%), while Haryana, Punjab, Chandigarh, Delhi, Pondicherry do not have a single Scheduled tribe (http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/222/12/12_chapter3.pdf).

About 93% of the Scheduled Tribe population is rural based. Out of the major 15 States, only three states, viz. Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu had more than 10% of the Scheduled Tribe population residing in rural areas, the respective percentages being 14.94, 12.47 and 12.01. The percentage share of Scheduled Tribe population in the total population of the following states are: Andhra Pradesh (7.6%), Assam (3.4%),

Bihar (7.0%), Gujarat (8.1%), Kerala (3.5%), Madhya Pradesh (4.8%), Orissa (5.1%), Rajasthan (4.6%), Uttar Pradesh (5.9%) and West Bengal (5.2%) (Ibid).

Tribals have to be involved in all the matters concerning their country. After independence, Planned development started and broadly three different approaches – i) Isolationist, ii) Assimilationist, and iii) Integrationist – were advanced (http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/222/12/12_chapter3.pdf). These approaches are presented, in brief, below.

9.5.1 Isolationist Approach

The first approach was a legacy of the British regime, and is usually described as 'leave them untouched'. The policy was to isolate the tribal population from the masses. The British took deliberate efforts not to develop communication in the tribal areas. Tribals were kept away from the rest of the population. Verrier Elwin (1934) supported the establishment of a sort of 'National park' or 'specimens in a human Zoo' of the tribals and advised that their contact with the outside should be reduced to the minimum. But, this approach was not followed for long.

9.5.2 Assimilationist Approach

The 'assimilationist' approach is the approach which paved the way for the tribal people to mingle with the neighbouring non-tribals. In India, the process of assimilation took place in different parts of the country, resulting in the gradual acceptance of Hindu culture by the tribals. The main criticism against this approach was that, this tried to change the tribals by imposing upon them the non-tribal customs and traditions. The advocates of this approach supported a direct assimilation without waiting for a slow and long-drawn change-over. The approach is also considered to be a failure.

9.5.3 Integrationist Approach

The past experience of the policies of isolation and assimilation, forced the planners to take the middle way between the two, which is called the integrationist approach. This approach was mainly the brain-child of Jawaharlal Nehru. The policy of integration consists of two types of measures for tribal development: i) Protective measures, and ii) Promotional measures.

9.5.3.1 Protective Measures

These measures consist of land policies, forest policies and the policies to protect tribal culture and traditions. Though the policy of protection and development is undoubtedly same in itself, it is difficult to say whether development is possible without upsetting the harmony that exists in the placid tribal life.

The protective measures are provided in the Constitution of India as mentioned in the preceding section. All these provisions provide for protection of tribals as well as for promotion of their development and welfare. These provisions not only put an end to the policy of indifference which had been followed during the pre-independence period but also gave testimony to tribal development and welfare programmes, making them a constitutional obligation for the future governments of the country (http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/222/12/12_chapter3.pdf).

In nutshell, the broad areas covered by the constitutional provisions in respect of tribal development include the following.

- a) Statutory recognition of tribal communities.

- b) Creation of scheduled areas for the thorough development of the tribals.
- c) Special representations in the parliament, in the legislative assemblies and the local bodies.
- d) Special privileges in the form of reservation of a certain percentage of posts in government services and seats in educational institutions.
- e) Recognition of the right to use local language for administration and other purposes and to profess one's faith.

In addition to the above, three provisions of the constitution deserve special mention. According to the Fifth Schedule, Union Executive is given the power of giving direction to the States in matters relating to the administration of scheduled areas. The Sixth Schedule designates tribal areas in Assam and Meghalaya where Autonomous District Councils and Regional Councils have been constituted with powers to make laws for management of land, forests, shifting of cultivation, appointment or succession of chief and headman, inheritance of property, marriage and divorce, social customs and matters relating to village or town administration. Article 275(1) of the constitution provides for grant-in-aid from the Union to the States for promoting the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes or for raising the level of administration of the Scheduled Areas. The constitution also provides for making institutional arrangement for appointment of the National Commission for Protection of Scheduled Tribes under Article 338 of the Constitution of India. This is because with the Constitution (89th Amendment) Act, 2003 the erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was later replaced by two separate Commissions, namely, i) the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC), and ii) the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) w. e. f. 19th February 2004.

9.5.3.2 Promotional Measures

These measures include development and welfare programmes undertaken by the government after independence (through plans) and implemented by different agencies including the voluntary agencies to make the tribal life better through the integrationist approach.

All these protective and promotional measures aim at advancing their social, economic, educational, linguistic, cultural, political interests and rights of STs. Thus, tribal development, in the true sense and in the present context of India, is in fact a post-independence concept and draws the spirit from the constitution itself. These efforts have, thus, become part and parcel of well planned process of development.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under "Answers to 'Check Your Progress' Questions."

6) What are the broad approaches to development of the Scheduled Tribes? Which of them is the better approach and why?

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- 7) What are the broad areas covered by the Constitutional provisions in respect of tribal development?

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9.6 POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES FOR TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

Tribal communities have been geographically, ecologically and culturally linked to forest habitats. In India, there are several local communities who depend on forest for primary or supplementary nutrition, ethnomedical practices, energy and various other life supporting needs. Communities have been affected by restrictions to forest access under protection laws. Most often, these laws draw their validation from a western perception of nature, very unlike the reciprocal relationship perceived by these communities. Most forest-dependent local communities in India are either marginally settled cultivators or shifting cultivators who supplement their nutritional sources with some hunting and gathering. A few communities depend almost exclusively on hunting and gathering from forests. Large tracts of forest are essential to their survival strategies.

9.6.1 Special Policy Measures

India's forests are home to millions of people, including many Scheduled Tribes, who live in or near the forest areas of the country. Forests provide them sustenance in the form of minor forest produce, water, grazing-grounds and habitat for shifting cultivation. Moreover, vast areas of land that may or may not be forests are classified as "forest" under India's forest laws, and those cultivating these lands are technically cultivating "forest land" (Sarin, 2005). The reason for this latter phenomenon is India's forest laws.

9.6.1.1 Rights of Forest-Dwelling Tribes on Forest Lands

The 1952 forest policy classified forests into protected forests for ecological balance, national forests for commercial use, village forests for community use and tree lands to improve the physical condition of the country. It was in fact retrogressive as the earlier, colonial policies left some space for subsistence use and did not touch the private/CPR (common pool resource) forests. The only silver lining was a soft approach to conversion from shifting cultivation.

India's forests are governed by two main laws, the Indian Forest Act, 1927 and the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972. The former empowers the government to declare any area to be a reserved forest, protected forest or village forest. The latter allows any area to be constituted as a "protected area", namely a national park, wildlife sanctuary, tiger reserve or community conservation area. Under these laws, the rights of people living in or depending on the area to be declared as a 'forest' or 'protected area' are to be "settled" by a "forest settlement officer." This basically requires that officer to enquire into the claims of people to land, minor forest-produce, etc., and, in the case of claims found to be valid, to allow them to continue or to extinguish them by paying compensation. Studies have shown that in many areas this process either did not take place at all or took place in a highly faulty manner. Thus, 82.9% of the forest blocks in undivided Madhya Pradesh had not been settled as of December 2003 (Prabhu Pradip.

2005, p.552). While all the hilly tracts of Orissa were declared government forests without any survey. In Orissa, around 40% of the government forests are “deemed reserved forests” which have not been surveyed. Those whose rights are not recorded during the settlement process are susceptible to eviction at any time. This “legal twilight zone” leads to harassment, evictions, extortion of money and sexual molestation of forest dwellers by forest officials, who wield absolute authority over forest dwellers’ livelihoods and daily lives (Gopalakrishnan, 2005, See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Scheduled_Tribes_and_Other_Traditional_Forest_Dwellers_\(Recognition_of_Forest_Rights\)_Act,_2006](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Scheduled_Tribes_and_Other_Traditional_Forest_Dwellers_(Recognition_of_Forest_Rights)_Act,_2006)).

The 1988 forest policy was some improvement in that it conceived people’s involvement and some protection for customary access rights, though with some riders like linking the access rights to the carrying capacity of the forest. There was also some conception of capacity building among forest communities and regenerating forest through planned silviculture. This is how the concept of Joint Forest Management (JFM) came into being as a participatory model for managing forest. Planned silviculture and JFM sounded better on paper than they have actually been at the ground level. Eucalyptus monocultured forest has replaced precious native biodiversity in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Orissa and categories of protected areas include national parks, reserved forests, JFM forests and biosphere reserves. In some places, Community Forest Management (CFM), intended to be a more participatory model, is used instead of JFM. National parks have been exposed to eco-development models, supposedly to build capacity among local communities: the models include ecotourism and Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) extraction. National parks typically have a core area with mega fauna and a fringe area which is administered like a JFM forest. Many of the national parks have human populations in their core areas. Protection practices, however, vary from one state to another, though there is some standardisation by the central government.

In the age of globalisation, the question of ensuring justice to local communities by restoring their access to the forest is something that has enormous implications, larger than just the issue at hand. Equally, it is a very contentious issue when seen in the context of protecting biological diversity, and it involves many different collectivities and interest groups. The protection accorded to the forest to the exclusion of local communities has been seen as a violation of human rights, while conflict between the state machinery and the people is detrimental to wildlife protection. The ethical implications of environmental protection and the responsibility of the human species to the rest of nature also require thorough consideration. In such situation, the link between forest and peoples is, thus, not just a contested ground within India, far less a theme that touches the lives of only the beneficiaries of forest-access legislation. The key issues here are: the survival of a shared wealth of biological and cultural diversity; a necessary rethinking of the link between human beings and the rest of nature in terms of cultural values; and also, an issue of conceptualizing the relations between the global and the local. It is, therefore, necessary to interpret the local realities in anthropological terms to evolve the best and most locally compatible conservation practices that will protect and enhance biological and cultural diversity. The key lies in identifying those modes of indigenous discourse that, to use the words of Jeffrey McNeely (1993), “support diversity as a value”. What is called for is, in essence, an informed dialogue. To protect biological and cultural diversity in India, we propose a larger and more inclusive dialogue at a very basic level, between local cultures and communities, their civil society institutions and those representing them in advocacy, i.e. the academic fraternity, public intellectuals, local scholars and the government. One form of dialogue very important to conservation practice is the interaction of indigenous or local knowledge with western science.

The Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Forest Rights Act describes it as a law intended to correct the “historical injustice” done to forest dwellers by the failure to recognise their rights.

The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006: It is a key piece of forest legislation passed in India on December 18, 2006. It has also been called the “Forest Rights Act”, the “Tribal Rights Act”, the “Tribal Bill”, and the “Tribal Land Act.” The law concerns the rights of forest-dwelling communities to land and other resources, denied to them over decades as a result of the continuance of colonial forest laws in India. Supporters of the Act claim that it will redress the “historical injustice” committed against forest dwellers, while including provisions for making conservation more effective and more transparent. The demand for the law has seen massive national demonstrations involving hundreds of thousands of people. However, the law has also been the subject of considerable controversy in the English press in India. Opponents of the law claim it will lead to massive forest destruction and should be repealed. A little over one year after it was passed, the Act was notified into force on December 31, 2007. On January 1, 2008, this was followed by the notification of the Rules framed by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs to supplement the procedural aspects of the Act ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Scheduled_Tribes_and_Other_Traditional_Forest_Dwellers\(Recognition_of_Forest_Rights\)_Act,_2006](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Scheduled_Tribes_and_Other_Traditional_Forest_Dwellers(Recognition_of_Forest_Rights)_Act,_2006)).

The new Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill needs to be contextualized in the cultural specificities of forest dependent peoples, particularly “tribal” peoples, their indigenous knowledge (IK) systems, and the need to revive a supportive relationship between local communities and the native biodiversity. The bill is silent on the issue of proving occupancy of forestland before 1980, the cut-off date for vesting land and recognizing rights. Without contesting the cut-off date, which by its very nature has to be arbitrary by any academic standard, we point out that this silence clearly leaves unwelcome space for manipulation by vested interests. Another shortcoming of the bill is its insistence on recognizing the rights of people scheduled in a particular area, which is typically a state level list. Maharashtra has set a benchmark of best practice in recognizing “tribal land”, based on more practical and credible criteria than “documentary evidence”, but the bill should evolve a standard practice mandatory for all states. Civil society institutions could catalyse consensus between peoples on land occupation with the help of academia and governance and informed by anthropological knowledge of the cultural link with forest. Mechanisms of land transfer should ideally target collectivities rather than individuals as beneficiaries, given especially the communal nature of customary landholding in many of the forest areas. Distribution of forestlands also raises another pertinent issue: to what extent the administration can ensure that the lands distributed would not be put to uses incompatible with conservation of biological diversity.

9.6.2 Programmes for Tribal Development

The tribal majority areas in the country are broadly divided into three categories, viz.

- i) Predominantly tribal states / union territories,
- ii) Scheduled area, and
- iii) Non-Schedule areas in the states.

All the tribal-majority States and Union Territories are placed in a special category for availing funds. The development and administration of tribal areas is accepted as a special responsibility of the central government even though they are integral parts of the concerned states. Several programmes and schemes have been divided into two categories, viz.

- i) central sector programmes which are fully financed by the central government, and
- ii) the centrally sponsored programmes which are partly financed by the central government, and rest of the expenditure meted out by the concerned State government.

According to B. D. Sharma (http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/222/12/12_chapter3.pdf) financial resources for developmental programmes in a state may comprise the following elements:

- i) investment in the central and centrally sponsored schemes;
- ii) state revenues;
- iii) share from certain central revenue;
- iv) plan assistance from the central government; and
- v) grants under Article 275 (1) on the basis of the recommendations of the Finance Commission.

The utilisation of State funds is broadly classified under two categories, viz. *Plan* and *non-plan*. The plan technically covers all those items which are included in the State or the Central plan. The non-plan includes expenditure on general administration as also on the maintenance of development schemes.

The Special Central Assistance (SCA) for tribal sub-plans is allocated between different states on the basis of three criteria:

- i) the tribal population of Sub-Plan area;
- ii) the geographical area of the Sub-Plan; and
- iii) the per capita gross output of the state.

The weightage for these three elements has been fixed in a certain proportion. While the first two criteria are simple, the quantum of assistance on the basis of the third criterion is determined with reference to the difference between the inverse of the State's per capita gross product and the inverse of the per capita gross national product. The financing agencies rendering their services in the tribal areas are Central Government, State Governments, and institutions such as commercial banks, co-operative banks, NABARD and voluntary organizations.

With this broad overview of the categorization of the priority areas of tribals, the schemes and programmes, funds and funding agencies, we will look at the efforts initiated by the Government for development of the Scheduled Tribes.

We are aware of the well-established causes of poverty which mainly include illiteracy, unemployment, under-employment and low productivity in agriculture and allied areas. Since farmers in TSP area have land-holding mostly on hill slopes, the fertility of land is very low. Further, droughts and soil erosion are now recurring features in the tribal areas. This has reduced employment opportunities of the tribals. Therefore, for improving the economic status of tribals, special programmes were launched, during 1980's, mainly:

- a) the Asset Programme, and
- b) the Employment Programme.

The Asset Programme aims at the overall integrated development of rural life through the removal of poverty and unemployment in rural areas. In this programme, productive assets are directly given to the poor. It is believed that income generated from these productive assets would not only be sufficient to repay the bank loans but will help the assisted families to cross the 'poverty line'. This programme is popularly known as Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP).

The Employment Generation Programmes, on the other hand, aim at providing employment through public works during the adverse agricultural season. The employment programme asserts that poverty persists because of the lack of employment opportunities. The earlier employment schemes were ad hoc in nature but the employment programme launched from 1980 onwards, became popularly known as National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and considered as permanent plan programme.

A number of employment-oriented and developmental programmes for tribals have been introduced by the government of India. In all the major programmes of country emphasis has always been laid on tribals among other weaker and backward sections of the society. These include Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Jawahar Rosgar Yojana (JRY), Prime Ministers Rosgar Yojana (PMRY) and Training of Rural Youth For Self-Employment (TRYSEM). IRDP scheme is absolutely for rural people those belonging to below poverty line and other programmes are for both rural as well as urban youth. All these schemes are implemented in the state by District Rural Development Agencies (DRDA's) in collaboration with Commercial and Co-operative Banks. We have already discussed these programmes among many other programmes in Block-2 of this course i.e. MAEE-001. You may revisit Block-2 to refresh your memory about these programmes in this context.

We can, thus, notice that the main thrust of the development strategies has been on the removal of poverty in tribal areas. The travails of tribal development need to be understood properly. The programmes should be related to the specific needs of the tribal community. Also, tribal development programmes should be integrated with the ongoing rural development programmes meant for poverty alleviation. A pragmatic and holistic approach to tribal development alone can produce good results.

We will discuss the tribal welfare with more emphasis on planned efforts and their effect including management in the following unit, i.e. Unit-10 of this Block.

9.6.2.1 Mainstreaming of Scheduled Tribes: Five Year Plans and Tribal Development

The Government of India through planning commission, among others, formulated strategies and programmes for tribal development as part of Five Year Plans of India. A brief account of the tribal development and welfare programmes during different plans is presented below (http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/222/12/12_chapter3.pdf).

First Five Year Plan (1951-1956): The First Five Year Plan outlined a positive policy for assisting the tribals as under.

- Assisting them to develop their natural resources and to evoke a productive economic life wherein they will enjoy the fruits of their own labour and will not be exploited by more organized economic forces from outside.
- It is not desirable to bring about changes in their religious and social life, except at the initiative of the tribal people themselves and with their willingness or consent.

- It is accepted that there are many features in tribal life which should not only be retained but also developed.
- The qualities of their dialects, and the rich content of their arts and crafts also need to be appreciated and preserved.

Taking into consideration the conditions of the tribal people, the First Planning Commission quoted that "There may be a good deal of justification for such (isolation) a policy of non-interference; but it is not easily practicable when tribal life has been influenced by social forces from without, and tribal communities have reached a certain degree of acculturation accompanied by the penetration of communications in the tribal areas, and of social services for the betterment of their lives." In the First Five Year Plan, *Community Development Projects* for all round development of rural areas especially the weaker sections were started.

However, the fact is that the first five year plan did not pay due special attention towards the development of tribal areas, because only certain isolated piecemeal attempts such as educational schemes, welfare schemes, etc., were introduced.

Second Five Year plan (1956-1961): During this plan the Ministry of Home Affairs provided fund to the Ministry of Community Development to establish *Special Multi-purpose Tribal Blocks (SMPT)* in areas with prominent tribal population.

During the second five year plan, recognizing the socio-economic conditions prevailing in the tribal areas, concrete development schemes were planned. Novel administration systems were introduced, with creation of multi-purpose tribal projects in certain selected tribal areas.

Third Five Year plan (1961-1966): Based on the recommendations of review (Verrier Elwin Committee) of SMPT Blocks, during the Third Plan period SMPT Blocks were renamed as Tribal Development Blocks (TDB) and suggested that they be opened in all areas where over 60% of the population were tribals. Thus, based on the recommendations of Verrier Elwin committee, tribal development block system had been implemented under third five year plan.

Three Annual Plans (1966-1969): During this period no special funds were provided for tribal development. However, in 1969-70 a decision was taken to extend the total life of TDBs to 15 years.

Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-1974): During the Fourth Five Year Plan, a series of programmes were conceived and launched to address specific target groups. The *Small Farmers Development Agencies (SFDA)* and *Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Development Agencies (MFAL)* were the first two in the series. In these cases, attention was shifted from area development to development of identified individuals who qualified for special attention according to certain objective criteria. The *Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP)* was another measure in the same direction, but with a difference. Here, the attention was given to the problem faced by an entire region which is depressed because of its agro-climatic situation. The specific target-group approach, however, was adopted to pay greater attention to the weaker sections of the society. *Tribal Development Agencies (TDA's)* were established on the pattern of SFDA to address the problems of the tribal population. Six tribal development agencies were started during the Fourth Plan. Each Tribal Development Agency covered a group of TD Blocks. Tribal Development Agencies were expected to comprise elements of economic development, social services and prospective measures.

On the eve of commencement of fourth five year plan, 489 tribal development blocks had come into existence for the economic betterment of scheduled tribe areas with large concentration of tribal populations. As one of the drawbacks of the functioning of TDBs it became clear that their activities were, however, not properly integrated with the general development plans for the region. The Fourth Plan tried to rectify this drawback by adopting the integrated area development approach.

Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79): During the middle of the Fourth Five Year Plan, i.e. in the year 1972, the Planning Commission set up a “Task Force on Development of Tribal Areas” with Vidyarthi as the Chairman. The task force observed that, the problem of the tribals reflected in primitive methods of agriculture, land alienation, indebtedness, adverse effects of industrialization, low rate of literacy, poor health and nutrition, etc., had not been solved (Bhownick). The committee opined that one of the important factors for the lack of impact so far was that development of Scheduled Tribes and tribal areas had been looked upon as a problem of ‘welfare’ as distinguished from ‘development’.

Taking into account the recommendations of the task force and other previous committees, during the Fifth Five Year Plan, an altogether new approach was adopted towards tribal development in the form of *Tribal Sub-plan*. It envisaged the total development of the tribal areas and provided the mechanism for integrating the developmental activities of the government and the semi-government organizations by financing through the Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP). The Sub-Plan aimed at narrowing the gap between the levels of development of tribal and other areas, and to improve the quality of life of the tribal communities in general. The First Sub-Plan (1974-79) accorded the highest priority to elimination of exploitation. For each Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP), an Integrated Area Development Plan focusing attention on the specific problems of the area and the tribal people has been formulated. The Sub-Plan areas in each state, thus, comprised a number of viable projects.

In view of weakness of earlier area-based programmes viz. tribal development blocks and tribal development agencies a new strategy was evolved in the fifth five year plan for the foundation of sub-plan for the area of tribal concentration. This is intended to achieve an intensity of attention to the tribal areas and devised measures to suit their local ethos. About 2/3 of tribal population in the country is estimated to be covered by sub-plans as were in operation in the fifth plan.

Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85): The Sixth Plan continued the Sub-Plan approach of the Fifth Plan by supplementing it through target-beneficiary approach with the objective of narrowing the gap between the level of development of the tribals and other developed communities and bringing about a qualitative change in the life of a tribal community.

The strategy of development lays emphasis on consolidation of the gains of protective measures, programmes of full employment, education and health services. The broad objectives of the Sixth Plan were: i) A progressive reduction in the incidents of poverty and unemployment; ii) Improving the quality of life through minimum needs programme; iii) A reduction in inequalities of income and wealth; and iv) Infra-structure development for further exploitation of potential of the tribal region.

The programmes under different sectors of development are required to be intensified with suitable modifications to remove the present inadequacies in implementation. The States have to give due importance to the integration of programmes in the field and effective delegation of powers to the Project Authorities in ITDPs. The approach in

the Sixth Plan for the development of backward areas in general was to rely, to a greater extent, on the development of agriculture, village and small-scale industries, subsidiary occupations and related services and also the Minimum Needs Programmes and Area Development Programmes. Improvement of economic status of the tribals was the main concern and suitable programmes of horticulture, cattle development, poultry, piggery, etc were carried out. More emphasis was placed on family-oriented programmes than on infrastructure development unlike in the previous Plans.

In the sixth five year plan, it was noticed that certain pockets of tribal concentration outside the tribal sub-plan area were still left out of the tribal sub-plan strategy. It was, therefore, decided during the sixth plan that pockets of center-groups villages or pockets having minimum of 10,000 population of which at least 50 percent are scheduled tribes, should be covered for Intensive Integrated Development and Modified Area Development Approach (MADA), under the tribal sub-plan.

Seventh Five Year Plan (1985 -90): The basic premises of the Tribal Sub-Plan continued in the Seventh Plan also. During the Seventh Plan, the Tribal Sub-Plan strategy comprised the following.

- a) Identification of the Development Blocks where tribal population is in majority and their constitution into ITDPs with a view to adopt there an integrated and project-based approach for development.
- b) Marking of funds for the Tribal Sub-Plan and ensuring the flow of funds from the control of State plan, sectoral outlays and from financial institutions.
- c) Creation of appropriate administrative structures in tribal areas and adoption of appropriate personnel policies.

The programme of tribal development with ITDP pattern was continued in the Seventh Plan also without any basic or major changes in the approach, pattern or structure, but better co-ordination was sought between various agencies, and social services were given priority.

For the seventh plan period (1985-90), about 40 lakhs scheduled tribe families below the poverty line were targeted to be provided economic assistance. In this plan, 3 new ITDPs have been added in Sikkim, by scheduled tribe population concentration norms as a special case, and by the end of 1987-88 total of 184 ITDPs were functioning. ITDP areas covered 313.21 lakhs tribal population.

Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97): The Eighth Plan largely emphasized the re-orientation of administrative structure at all levels for functional co-ordination, integration and effective delivery of services. The strategy specifically aimed at improving the living environment of the tribals by giving them better social and civic amenities and facilities. The working group has recommended that the objective of the Seventh Plan would continue for the eighth plan period. The objectives for the Eighth Plan in this regard are detailed below.

- a) Progressive reduction in poverty and creation of employment thereby providing reduction in income inequalities.
- b) Improving the quality of life through a minimum needs programme.
- c) Development and strengthening of infrastructure for further economic exploitation of the Tribal Sub-Plan area.

- d) Development of confidence of tribals along the desired lines through intensive educational efforts.

In the Eighth Five Year Plan, Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) area, Modified Area Development Approach (MADA), Scattered Development Plans, and Primitive Tribe Development Plans have been stressed. Despite the effects to diversify economic activities in non-formal sectors, the predominant source of livelihood in TSP area continued to be agriculture. The main thrust was on the development of fisheries, sericulture, horticulture, plantation on waste land, growing vegetables to provide supplemental income and new avenues of employment to the tribals. Human resources development through education, vocational/craftsman-training were taken up to improve the skills of the tribals. Expansion of irrigation facilities and electrification of tribal settlements, expansion of irrigation wells, fertilizers, improvement of cattle-breed and mining activities have also been taken up. In this plan, family-oriented schemes have been also stressed to uplift the tribal families. The community development programmes were given second priority.

The eighth plan gave importance to Tribe Sub-Plan and the schemes specifically targeted for the welfare and development of scheduled tribes to ensure that the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are able to derive adequate benefits and felt that a national policy on rehabilitation of people displaced by large development projects will need to be evolved. It also emphasized the empowerment of women belonging to the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes.

Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002): The strategy in this Plan was to achieve a seven percent growth rate for the economy. The main objectives of the Ninth Plan were the generation of adequate productive employment, eradication of poverty, empowerment of women and socially disadvantaged groups. It aimed at ensuring food and nutritional security for all, particularly the vulnerable sections of society. The principal task of the Ninth Plan was to usher in a new era of people-oriented planning, in which not only the government at the Center and the States but also the people at large, particularly the poor, can fully participate.

A participatory planning process is an essential precondition for ensuring equity as well as accelerating the rate of growth of the economy. The government of India enacted an amendment to the constitution of India (73rd Amendment) for ensuring representation of backward and marginalised communities, e.g. Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and women in Panchayati Raj institutions. It is now felt that the fruits of development could be multiplied manifold with the involvement of people at the grass-root level in the process of development. The approach for the Ninth Five Year Plan has drawn attention to the need for national policy for tribal development. Effects will be made to ensure that the tribal economy is protected and supported against threats from the external markets. The ownerships/patent rights of the tribal people in respect of minor forest produces vis-a-vis the use of medicinal plants will be protected as per the provision of intellectual property rights (IPR). Ninth Plan process aimed at fulfilling the ambition of tribals towards the initiation of 21st century and bring them more nearer to national mainstream.

This plan adopted the following strategies to empower socially disadvantaged groups like the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes, and other backward classes and minorities.

- Creation of an enabling environment that is conducted for SCs, STs, OBCs and minorities to exercise their right freely, enjoy their privileges to be able to lead a life with confidence and dignity.

- Adoption of a three-pronged strategy of: i) social empowerment; ii) economic empowerment; and iii) social justice, in empowering these disadvantaged groups.
- Ensuring removal of disparities; elimination of exploitation and suppression and providing protection to the disadvantaged groups.
- Ensuring the development and benefits to 'reach the unreached' through equitable distribution and with social justice.
- Ensuring participation of the socially disadvantaged groups in the process of planning, not merely as the beneficiaries but to take part effectively in the formulation of the need- based programmes / projects, their implementation, supervision and monitoring.
- Accelerating the ongoing process of improving the socio-economic status of the disadvantaged groups through effective implementation of various programmes and, thus, bring them on par with the rest of the society.

Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007): Focus was on increasing the forest and tree cover to 25% by 2007 and 33% by 2012, and tackling the unresolved problems of the tribes. The tenth plan formulated a comprehensive national policy for empowering tribes through their integrated development, which will lay down the responsibilities of the different wings of the government with appropriate accountability.

Eleventh Five-Year Plan (2007-2012): Its strategy was inclusive growth. In the process of inclusion, the plan paid special attention to the needs of the scheduled tribes and other socially disadvantaged groups.

In Unit 10 that follows in this Block, we will focus on different schemes aimed at promoting tribal welfare, besides covering some other programmes meant for tribal development.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under "Answers to 'Check Your Progress' Questions."

8) What are the special policy measures aimed at promoting the development of the Scheduled Tribes?

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9.7 LET US SUM UP

We have presented the population growth, and aspects and measures of development and deprivation of the Scheduled Tribes. We have highlighted broad approaches to the development of Scheduled Tribes. We have also focused on the special measures aimed at protection of the rights and interests of the Scheduled Tribes, and the important policies, schemes and programmes meant for promotion of their integrated development, besides bringing them into national mainstream.

9.8 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS' QUESTIONS

- 1) Except for three decades, namely, 1891-1901, 1911-21 and 1921-31, the aggregate tribal population did register increases. In the pre-independence tribal population growth there was *constancy* of its proportion to the total since the late 19th century (as against secular declines in the proportion of the Hindus) that could have resulted from its *relatively lower mortality*, not from higher fertility vis-à-vis those of the Hindu population. The decadal growth of enumerated tribal population being higher than that of the total population in the post-independence period, the former's proportion rose from 5% in 1951 to more than 8% in 2001. The number of communities deemed to be tribes has increased with the modernisation of India between 1950 and 1976. The large part of the explanation for the changing pattern of regional composition of the tribal population lies in the interstate differences in real demographic processes, e.g. birth rates, death rates and their trends, patterns of spatial mobility and movements of tribal people. Despite the number of STs having already exceeded 500, it is only a few major tribal groups that constitute a large bulk of the aggregate tribal population of the country. An acute food deprivation and extreme vulnerability to death and disease have generally been held responsible for diminution of some small tribal groups in specific locations. Three major tribal groups, namely, Bhil, Santal, Gond constitute nearly 40% of the country's total tribal population, and this numeric dominance of just a few major tribes amidst hundreds of tiny groups and sub-groups has been continuing for a long time past, leaving aggregative analysis of India's tribal population useful and credible. In distinct contrast to India's overall female-male ratio (FMR) being unfavourable to females, it has been relatively balanced among tribes.

After several decades of discussions and research, a few stark facts have emerged almost indisputably in the Indian context: a) that low overall FMR in total population is largely related to a female mortality disadvantage (vis-à-vis males), especially in infancy and young childhood; b) that this relative female disadvantage is a manifestation of familial discrimination and neglect mostly against girls in respect of distribution of resources, especially medical attention and healthcare; c) apart from worsening relative share of females in the distribution of benefits of modern improvements in health and medical facilities, there are indications of intensification – along with overall development and a large-scale transition to lower fertility regime – of anti-female biases, often more selectively against higher parity daughters born already or abortion of high parity female foetus. Finally, the above anti-female outcomes are generally traced to a pervasive culture of “son preference” or a gender bias (i.e. preference for sons over daughters), which is a prominent expression of fundamental Asian cultural and patriarchal values in which female status and autonomy is relatively low. *Against these disquieting (and even perhaps growing) imbalances in FMR of India's general population, the tribal record of a more balanced sex-ratio is of considerable interest.* This implies, a much lesser anti-female discrimination (especially, against female infants and children) in tribal societies vis-à-vis those of general population, an implication which is often supported by related research and evidence. Besides, there exists a substantial anthropological evidence elucidating relatively little (or perhaps almost total absence of) gender bias in traditional tribal society and culture. Mortality levels are also comparatively lower among the tribes.

- 2) Tribal people – partly because of the healthy aspects of their habitation, and partly

due to their isolation from mainstream population – were perhaps less severely inflicted by epidemics. But, in respect of two key human needs, namely, health and education, tribals appear clearly most deprived, with their extremely limited access to hospitals, medical doctors, medicines, and schools in comparison with even aggregate SC population.

Several considerations and related historical evidence do lend support to the plausibility of a relative mortality and health advantage of the tribes (particularly in infancy and childhood ages) in the past. For example, prolonged breast-feeding and early start of food supplement for infants – both of which are now widely known to be favourable to infant and early childhood survival – have been prominent traditional practices in tribal communities. A few other comparatively good features relating to infant and childcare practices in tribal cultures vis-à-vis mainstream (non-tribal) include the custom of holding infants and children vertically while awake and a close physical contact with mothers.

Furthermore, tribal females historically used to marry on average about four years later than their Hindu counterparts. In fact, since child marriage is not practised in traditional tribal communities, this could have been a contributor to the comparative mortality advantage of tribal infants, as infants of very young mothers run a higher risk of death. Comparatively greater autonomy and command of tribal females over intra-household resources might have contributed to a relatively better nutritional levels of tribal children vis-à-vis non-tribal counterparts historically. Indeed, global evidence (especially prior to the age of large-scale use of antibodies and vaccines) shows that communities, which used to live in less crowded settlements and in great intimacy with natural environments (e.g. forests and hills), fared relatively better in mortality terms. This might have been true of India's tribal people too in the past when their main settlements were not only in mountainous, hilly and forested tracts but also their secluded circumstances left them with lesser chances of exposure to contamination and disease transmission. Similarly, plausible is their relative efficiency/advantage in using effective indigenous herbs/medicines for illness treatment (vis-à-vis non-tribal mainstream) in the pre-modern period of epidemiology and medical sciences. Besides, tribal people – partly because of these healthy aspects of their habitation, and partly due to their isolation from mainstream population – were perhaps less severely inflicted by epidemics.

- 3) The UNDP's representations of human development and deprivation encapsulated in the human development index (HDI), human poverty index (HPI), gender development index (GDI) and gender empowerment measure (GEM) have, now, become standard measures in development discussion.

- *Human Development Index:* The HDI is a composite index representing three dimensions of human development, viz. economic, educational and health. The indicators for these are per capita monthly expenditure adjusted for inequality; a combination of literacy rate and intensity of formal education; and a combination of life expectancy at age one and infant mortality, respectively. Our HDI of 0.504 is close to UNDP's HDI of 0.514. India is in the medium-income, medium human development category. The UNDP's HDI uses per capita GDP, with purchasing power parity (US\$). Since Indian income figures are not available for social groups, we follow the Planning Commission's use of inequality-adjusted per capita consumption. This, however, makes it difficult to make direct comparisons between our HDI for STs and that of UNDP. However, on some broad comparable statements there is a considerable difference between the all-India HDI and the HDI for

STs. The difference of about 30 per cent would put the STs in a different category in international comparisons. They would firmly be in the low-human development category, which includes sub-Saharan Africa, as against the middle-human development status of all-India. Further, the STs of Orissa, already a state with low human development in India, would fall to the bottom of the list of HDIs of sub-Saharan African countries.

- *Gender Equality Index:* As one would expect, the GEI among STs at 80.2 per cent is higher than it is for all-India at 69.1 per cent. Of course, the GEI as calculated here, following the Planning Commission's methodology, is very limited. Its three variables are economic attainment, as measured by the worker population ratio; health attainment, as measured by life expectancy at age one and infant mortality; and educational attainment, as measured by the literacy rate of those above the age of six and the intensity of formal education respectively. All three variables are given equal weight in the calculation of the GEI. The high rate of ST female workforce participation, compared to all-India female workforce participation, makes the ST GEI somewhat higher than that for all-India. However, the high rate of ST female workforce participation does not say anything about the quality of that workforce participation.

Dimensions of Deprivation: We look at a few dimensions of deprivation among the STs, taking up only those aspects that can be seen from nation-wide statistics. Overall, in literacy, the gap between STs and "others" has reduced from 1991 to 2001. Further, the decrease in dropout ratios over this period shows an improvement in completion in all categories of school education. However, in the important area of secondary school education, the gap between STs and 'all' has gone up from 14.2 to 17.7 percentage points, while the dalits (SCs) are closing this gap. The ST and all-India difference is greater for under-five mortality than it is for infant mortality. The reasons for this may lie in a number of factors – low birth-weight, greater incidence of malnutrition, lower immunisation, lesser access to safe drinking water and infrastructure, including roads, and lower levels of women's education. Infrastructure is largely a matter of state provision, rather than one of per capita income or consumption. The ST areas are under-provided compared to the rest of the country in terms of roads, electricity and health infrastructure.

- 4) There are adequate constitutional safeguards that protect and promote the political interests of the Scheduled Tribes. These are as follows.
 - **Article 164(1):** It makes a special provision for Tribal Affairs Ministers in the States of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa.
 - **Article 243:** It provides for reservation of seats in Panchayats.
 - **Article 330:** It provides for reservation of seats for STs in Lok Sabha.
 - **Article 334:** It originally laid down that the provisions relating to the reservation of seats for SCs/STs in the Lok Sabha and State Vidhan Sabhas (and the representation of the Anglo-Indian community in the Lok Sabha and the State Vidhan Sabhas) would cease to have effect on the expiration of a period of ten years from the commencement of the Constitution. This Article has been amended five times, extending the said period by ten years on each occasion. This provision will now expire in January 2020.
 - **Article 337:** It provides for reservation of seats for STs in State Legislatures;

- **Article 371:** It makes special provisions for protection of the Schedule Tribes in different States including those in North East region.

5) Following Articles of Indian Constitution provide for reservation for STs in Government employment/service.

- **Article 16(4):** It empowers the State to make “any provision for reservation in the appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens which, in the opinion of the State, is not adequately represented in the services under the State”. It includes STs.
- **Article 16(4A):** It provides that nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from making any provision for reservation in matters of promotion, “with consequent seniority” to any class or classes of posts in the services under the State in favour of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes which, in the opinion of the State, are not adequately represented in the services under the State.
- **Article 16(4B):** It specifies that nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from considering any unfilled vacancies of a year which are reserved for being filled up in that year in accordance with any provision for reservation made under clause (4) or clause (4A) as a separate class of vacancies to be filled up in any succeeding year or years, and such class of vacancies shall not be considered together with the vacancies of the year in which they are being filled up for determining the ceiling of fifty percent reservation on total number of vacancies of that year.
- **Article 320(4):** It provides that nothing in clause (3) shall require a Public Service Commission to be consulted as respects the manner in which any provision under Article 16(4A) may be made or the manner in which effect may be given to the provisions of Article 335.
- **Article 335:** It mentions that the claims of the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes shall be taken into consideration, consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration, in making the appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State.

Provided that nothing in this Article shall prevent in making of any provision in favor of member of SCs and STs for relaxation in qualifying marks in any examination or lowering the standards of evaluation, for reservation in matters of promotion to any class or classes of services or posts in connection with affairs of Union or of a State (Added by the Constitutional 82nd Amendment Act, 2000).

6) There are three broad approaches to Tribal development. They are as follows.

- i) **Isolationist Approach:** This approach was a legacy of the British regime, and is usually described as ‘leave them untouched’. The policy was to isolate the tribal population from the masses. The British took deliberate efforts not to develop communication in the tribal areas. Tribals were kept away from the rest of the population. Verrier Elwin (1934) supported the establishment of a sort of ‘National park’ or ‘specimens in a human Zoo’ of the tribals and advised that their contact with the outside should be reduced to the minimum. But, this approach was not followed for long.
- ii) **Assimilationist Approach:** The ‘assimilationist’ approach is the approach

which paved the way for the tribal people to mingle with the neighbouring non-tribals. In India, the process of assimilation took place in different parts of the country, resulting in the gradual acceptance of Hindu culture by the tribals. The main criticism against this approach was that, this tried to change the tribals by imposing on them the non-tribal customs and traditions. The advocates of this approach supported a direct assimilation without waiting for a slow and long-drawn change-over. The approach is also considered to be a failure.

- iii) *Integrationist Approach*: The past experience of the policies of isolation and assimilation, forced the planners to take the middle way between the two, which is called the integrationist approach. This approach was mainly the brain-child of Jawaharlal Nehru. The policy of integration consists of two types of measures for tribal development: i) Protective measures, and ii) Promotional measures.

Out of the above three approaches *integrationist approach is the better one* as it does not attempt to isolate them from the mainstream development nor it attempts to assimilate them into the so called majority culture. But, it aims at development of tribal as one entity and developed and integrated part of national mainstream.

- 7) The broad aspects of tribal development that the constitutional provisions provide for are as follows.
- a) Statutory recognition of tribal communities.
 - b) Creation of scheduled areas for the thorough development of the tribals.
 - c) Special representations in the Parliament, in the Legislative Assemblies and Local Bodies.
 - d) Special privileges in the form of reservation of a certain percentage of posts in government services and seats in educational institutions.
 - e) Recognition of the right to use local language for administration and other purposes and to profess one's faith.

Further, Union Executive is given the power of giving direction to the States in matters relating to the administration of scheduled areas. The Sixth Schedule designates tribal areas in Assam and Meghalaya where Autonomous District Councils and Regional Councils have been constituted with powers to make laws for management of land, forests, shifting of cultivation, appointment or succession of chief and headman, inheritance of property, marriage and divorce, social customs and matters relating to village or town administration. Article 275(1) of the constitution provides for grant-in-aid from the Union to the States for promoting the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes or for raising the level of administration of the Scheduled Areas. The constitution also provides for making institutional arrangement for appointment of the National Commission for Protection of Scheduled Tribes under Article 338 of the Constitution of India. This is because with the Constitution (89th Amendment) Act, 2003, the erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was later replaced by two separate Commissions, namely, i) the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC), and ii) the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) w. e. f. 19 February 2004. All these provisions that exist in the constitution protect and promote their social, economic, educational, linguistic, cultural, political interests and rights.

- 8) The special measures for protection of the tribals' interests have to be negotiated vis-à-vis protection of the forest, wild life and the totality of the natural environment in their context. The 1952 forest policy classified forests into protected forests for ecological balance, national forests for commercial use, village forests for community use and tree lands to improve the physical condition of the country. It was, in fact, retrogressive as the earlier colonial policies left some space for subsistence use and did not touch the private/CPR (common pool resource) forests. The only silver lining was a soft approach to conversion from shifting cultivation.

India's forests are governed by two main laws, the Indian Forest Act, 1927 and the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972. The former empowers the government to declare any area to be a reserved forest, protected forest or village forest. The latter allows any area to be constituted as a "protected area", namely a national park, wildlife sanctuary, tiger reserve or community conservation area. Under these laws, the rights of people living in or depending on the area to be declared as a 'forest' or 'protected area' are to be "settled" by a "forest settlement officer." This basically requires that officer to enquire into the claims of people to land, minor forest-produce, etc., and, in the case of claims found to be valid, to allow them to continue or to extinguish them by paying compensation.

The 1988 forest policy was some improvement in that it conceived people's involvement and some protection for customary access rights, though with some riders like linking the access rights to the carrying capacity of the forest.

The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006: It is a key piece of forest legislation passed in India on December 18, 2006. It has also been called the "Forest Rights Act", the "Tribal Rights Act", the "Tribal Bill", and the "Tribal Land Act." The law concerns the rights of forest-dwelling communities to land and other resources, denied to them over decades as a result of the continuance of colonial forest laws in India. Supporters of the Act claim that it will redress the "historical injustice" committed against forest dwellers, while including provisions for making conservation more effective and more transparent. The demand for the law has seen massive national demonstrations involving hundreds of thousands of people. However, the law has also been the subject of considerable controversy in the English press in India. Opponents of the law claim, it will lead to massive forest destruction and should be repealed. A little over one year after it was passed, the Act was notified into force on December 31, 2007. On January 1, 2008, this was followed by the notification of the Rules framed by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs to supplement the procedural aspects of the Act.

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UNIT 10 TRIBAL WELFARE: PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Structure

- 10.0 Introduction
- 10.1 Objectives
- 10.2 Tribal Development Policies and Programmes: A Brief Review
- 10.3 The Ministry of Tribal Affairs: Mandate, Role, Strategy and Concerns/Constraints
 - 10.3.1 The Mandate of the Ministry
 - 10.3.2 The Role of the Ministry
 - 10.3.3 Strategy for Tribal Development: The TSP Approach
 - 10.3.4 Major Concerns/Constraints in Tribal Development
 - 10.3.4.1 What Needs to be Done?
- 10.4 Important Schemes for Tribal Welfare
 - 10.4.1 Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Plan (SCA to TSP)
 - 10.4.2 Grants under Provision of Article 275(1) of the Constitution
 - 10.4.3 Strengthening Education among Scheduled Tribe Girls in Low Literacy Districts
 - 10.4.4 Grants-in-aid to State Tribal Development Cooperative Corporations and others
 - 10.4.5 Village Grain Bank Scheme
 - 10.4.6 Grant-in-aid to Voluntary Organizations Working for Welfare of Scheduled Tribes
 - 10.4.7 Scheme on Research and Training
 - 10.4.8 Scheme of Development of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGS)
 - 10.4.9 Post-Metric Scholarship for ST Students, Book Bank Scheme and Overseas Scholarships
 - 10.4.10 Up-gradation of Merit of ST Students and Scheme for Coaching
 - 10.4.10.1 Coaching for Scheduled Tribes
 - 10.4.11 Scheme for Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups
- 10.5 Scheduled Tribe Claims and Related Matters
 - 10.5.1 Ascertaining ST Status of Individuals
 - 10.5.1.1 On their migration
 - 10.5.1.2 Through their marriages
 - 10.5.2 Issue of Scheduled Tribe Certificates
 - 10.5.2.1 Punishment for Officials Issuing Scheduled Tribe Certificate without Proper Verification
 - 10.5.2.2 Liberalization of Procedure for Issue of Scheduled Tribe Certificate to Migrants from other States / Union Territories
 - 10.5.3 Procedure for Inclusion in or Exclusion from the List of Scheduled Tribes
- 10.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 10.7 Answers to 'Check Your Progress' Questions
- 10.8 References

10.0 INTRODUCTION

In Unit 9, we have presented you a broad picture of tribal development policies and programmes. You are thus aware that the task of tribal development is primarily their

socio-economic development to be accomplished in systematic, phased, time-bound and integrated manner befitting of their given realities, and to ensure progressive elimination of all forms of exploitation for their march towards the goal of equality and justice.

The tribal welfare planning and implementation are related to various issues at national state and local levels. The greatest challenge that the Government of India has been facing since independence is proper provision of social and economic justice to the scheduled tribe people by ameliorating their socio-economic conditions. In this regard, it is important to mention that, besides the policies and programmes discussed in the preceding unit, there are many special schemes aimed at promoting tribal welfare. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India is the key agency involved in planning and implementation of the schemes aimed at tribal welfare. Therefore, in the present unit i.e. Unit 10, we will, focus on these schemes and the role of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs with a view to present a comprehensive picture of tribal welfare policy planning, implementation and management, among other relevant things.

10.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, we expect you to be able to:

- Explain the mandate, role and strategy of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs;
- Discuss the concerns/constraints in promotion of tribal welfare;
- Appreciate the need for and significance of different schemes meant for promotion of tribal welfare; and
- Identify and promote programmes and schemes meant for the Scheduled Tribes for their larger benefit and welfare.

10.2 TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES: A BRIEF REVIEW

Though the tribes are the sons of the same soil and the citizens of the same country they are one of the weaker sections of Indian population from ecological, economic, educational and other angles. They born and grow as the children of nature. They are deprived of many infrastructural facilities and some are isolated from modern society. The Scheduled District Act of 1874, therefore, kept most of these areas administratively separate; the same situation was allowed to continue under the Government of India Act, 1919 and 1935 as well. The British adopted the policy of isolation and tried to keep these tribals away from the mainstream of Indian life. However, after independence this policy was abandoned and new policy of tribal development and integration was initiated. The Constitution of India has made definite provisions for the welfare and uplift of the tribal people throughout the country (Kulamani Padhi, 2005).

A review of tribal situation would indicate that the strategy for development of tribals would require an intensive approach to the tribal problems in terms of their geographical and demographic concentration, if the faster development of the tribals is to take place. The community development efforts in the tribal areas were, therefore, taken up for the supplementation by starting a few special multi-purpose tribal development projects covering a few blocks in 1954. A number of commissions and committees were appointed thereafter to look into the problems of development in the tribal areas of the country, and they have recommended a number of measures to remove the socio-economic

imbalance including breaking down their old psychological barriers, which exist in the tribal areas. The important commissions and committees appointed so far include the following (Kulamani Padhi, 2005).

- 1) The social welfare team of committee on plan projects, 1959.
- 2) The Verrier Elwin committee on tribal development, 1959.
- 3) The scheduled areas and schedule tribe commission (Dhebar committee, 1961)
- 4) The special working group on cooperatives for backward classes 1961 (Shri M. D. Bhargava as its chairman).
- 5) The task force on the development of tribal areas, 1972.
- 6) The Dube committee, 1972.
- 7) The study group on relief of indebtedness, Land Alienation and Restoration in Development Agency Area, 1973 (Shri P. S. Appu as its chairman).
- 8) The committee on tribal economy in forest area, 1976.
- 9) The study team of cooperative structure in tribal development project areas, 1976.
- 10) The team of marketing, credit and cooperation in tribal areas, 1978 (Shri K. S. Bawa committee).
- 11) The working group on development of scheduled tribes during the 7th five year plan (1985-90).

The Dhebar Commission (1961) recommended an integral approach based on the minimum essential items like food, drinking water, employment, education, health and village road. The task force on development of tribal areas in 1972 suggested that the ecological, occupational and social preceptors of the tribal population should be properly assessed for formulation of policy and its implementation so that a steady flow of benefits could be assured to the tribal people. The Dube Committee in 1972 tried to define a new strategy for tribal development and suggested that the problem of tribal development should be defined at national level and national efforts required for tackling it are to be worked out. It also suggested an integrated area development approach in consonance with the genius and aspiration of tribal people (Ibid).

Different committees and working groups at national level expressed that there is an urgent need to adopt a comprehensive national policy for the empowerment of tribals with definite goal and targets to be achieved within a specific time-frame. The policy to be adopted should be able to provide a perspective which ensures that the status of tribal population is raised to that of the rest of the society and they get their due share of benefit from development programmes. For effective implementation, a national action plan need to be formulated by taking into consideration all the tribal specific issues, namely high rates of illiteracy, health and nutritional deficiencies, lack of employment and income generation opportunities, lack of basic amenities like housing, drinking water, sanitation, social exploitation, displacement, etc. The national plan of action should also specify clearly the sector-wise action points, along with allocation required, mechanism for implementation and monitoring, etc. The national policy on rehabilitation of displaced persons needs to be finalized expeditiously. The policy should have special focus on rehabilitation of the displaced tribes. It should not only ensure that no deterioration takes places in living conditions of tribals that exist prior to displacement but should also provide for betterment. Also, as the primitive tribal groups are struggling for their

survival there is an immediate need for the preparation of national action plan for survival, protection and development of primitive tribal groups, keeping in view their social, economic and other conditions including their special needs.

10.3 THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS: MANDATE, ROLE, STRATEGY AND CONCERNS/CONSTRAINTS

The tribal majority areas in the country are broadly divided into *three categories*, viz.

- i) Predominantly tribal states / union territories,
- ii) Scheduled area, and
- iii) Non-Scheduled areas in the states.

All the tribal-majority States and Union Territories are placed in a *special category* for availing funds. The development and administration of tribal areas is accepted as a special responsibility of the central government even though they are integral parts of the concerned states. The crucial agency that plays vital role in tribal welfare is the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (Mehta, 2004 and 2006). In such a situation, we will now attempt to present you the mandate and other aspects of this Ministry below.

10.3.1 The Mandate of the Ministry

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs was constituted in October 1999 with the objective of providing more focused attention on the integrated socio-economic development of the most under-privileged sections of the Indian society namely, the Scheduled Tribes (STs), in a coordinated and planned manner. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is the nodal Ministry for the overall policy, planning and coordination of programmes for development of STs. To this end, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs undertakes activities that flow from the subjects allocated under the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961. These include the following (<http://tribal.nic.in/index2.asp?sublinkid=522&langid=1>).

- 1) Social security and social insurance to the Scheduled Tribes.
- 2) Tribal welfare planning, project formulation, research, evaluation, statistics and training.
- 3) Promotion and development of voluntary efforts on tribal welfare.
- 4) Scheduled Tribes, education including scholarship to students belonging to such tribes.
- 5) Development of Scheduled Tribes – All matters including legislation relating to the rights of forest-dwelling Scheduled Tribes on forest lands (**Note:** It is important to note that the Ministry of Tribal Affairs shall thus be the nodal Ministry for overall policy, planning and coordination of programmes of development for the Scheduled Tribes. But, as far as sectoral programmes and schemes related to development of these communities is concerned policy planning, monitoring, evaluation, etc., as also their coordination will be the responsibility of the concerned Central Ministries / Departments, State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. Each Central Ministry / Department will be the nodal Ministry or Department concerning its sector).
- 6) Scheduled Areas: a) Matters relating to autonomous districts of Assam excluding

roads and bridge-works and ferries thereon; and b) Regulations framed by the Governors of States for Scheduled Areas and for Tribal Areas specified in Part 'A' of the Table appended to paragraph 20 of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution.

- 7) Commission to report on the administration of Scheduled Areas and the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes; and issue of directions regarding the drawing up and execution of schemes essential for the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes in any State.
- 8) The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (Commission for Scheduled Tribes).
- 9) Implementation of the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 (No.22 of 1955) and the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 (No.33 of 1989), excluding administration of criminal justice in regard to offences in so far as they relate to Scheduled Tribes.

10.3.2 The Role of the Ministry

It needs to be emphasized that the programmes and schemes of the Ministry are intended to support and supplement, through financial assistance, the efforts of other Central Ministries, the State Governments and voluntary organizations, and to fill critical gaps taking into account the situation of STs. ***The primary responsibility for promoting the interests of Scheduled Tribes thus rests with all the Central Ministries.*** The Ministry compliments their efforts by way of various developmental interventions in critical sectors through specially tailored schemes. These schemes comprising the schemes for economic, educational and social development of Scheduled Tribes are administered by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and implemented through the State Governments / Union Territory Administrations and voluntary organizations.

Organization and Administration: The Ministry of Tribal affairs is functioning under the overall guidance of the Union Minister, Ministry of Tribal Affairs assisted by the Minister of State and the Secretary. The Secretary is assisted by Joint Secretary, and Economic Adviser, among others, belonging to group "A", "B", "C" and "D" posts. **The Ministry is organized into Divisions, Sections and Units.** Each division is headed by a Deputy Secretary / Director.

The establishment and general administration of the Ministry proper and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) are handled in the Administration Division. In addition, establishment matters of officers appointed under Central Staffing Scheme for the Department proper and ex-cadre posts, i.e. Economic Advisor, various Statistical Cadre, etc., are being administered in this Division.

10.3.3 Strategy for Tribal Development: The TSP Approach

As we have discussed in Unit-9, the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) Strategy has been adopted for all round development of tribal areas throughout the country since Fifth Five Year Plan. Under the TSP approach almost all tribal inhabited areas have been covered under any one of the following programmes, depending upon their population percentile (<http://www.tribal.gov.in/writereaddata/mainlinkFile/File722.pdf>).

- i) Integrated Tribal Area Development Project (ITDPs)
- ii) Modified Area Development Approach (MADA)
- iii) Clusters
- iv) Primitive Tribal Groups

The TSP approach ensures allocation of fund for tribal areas from State Plan as well as Central Ministries, at least proportionate to population of the tribals in the state (from state plan) and to the overall proportionate tribal population for the country from the budget of Central Ministries.

10.3.4 Major Concerns/Constraints in Tribal Development

In the preceding Unit, we have discussed the policies and programmes of tribal development. In spite of changing policies and diversified programmes for tribal development there are innumerable constraints responsible for lower pace of tribal development process than desired. Some of the major constraints are as follows (<http://tribal.nic.in/index2.asp?sublinkid=522&langid=1>):

- i) ***Destruction of forests:*** There exists an intricate relationship between tribals and forests in forest eco-systems because the forests are the source of livelihood for tribals. The depleting forest resources are threatening imminent food security for a good portion of the tribal population.
- ii) ***Lack of awareness:*** There exists lack of awareness among tribal population about various developmental programmes launched by the Government of India and States, resulting in their exploitation.
- iii) ***Protection of tribal rights and concessions:*** The tribals have been given numerous rights and concessions under various statutes of central as well as State Governments, but they remain deprived of the benefits arising out of such statutory provisions due to their ignorance and apathy of enforcing agencies.

The Constitution not only grants equality to women but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. Within the framework of a democratic polity our laws, development policies, plans and programmes have aimed at women's advancement in different spheres. The National Commission for Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women. The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the Constitution of India have provided for reservation of seats in the local bodies of Panchayats and Municipalities for women, laying a strong foundation for their participation in decision-making at the local levels. Active participation of women in the entire development process is essential for the overall socio-economic development of any country. Therefore, raising the status of women in general and that of socially and economically backward women in particular is not just a moral imperative but also a strategic one.

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is concerned about the well-being of the Scheduled Tribes who suffer as a group due to their social and economic backwardness and relative isolation. The major policies of the Ministry are accordingly aimed at ensuring the overall development of both Scheduled Tribe men and women. However, within the Scheduled Tribes, women often suffer from a greater disadvantage. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, therefore, while trying to ensure that women benefit equally from general schemes also has some special schemes meant for the benefit of ST women and girls. The national commission review on the working of the constitution (May, 2001) clearly indicates that a lot needs to be done for their further development. Achievements under the schemes having coverage for women beneficiaries during 2010-11 also indicate that the ultimate goal of tribal development is not yet realized.

10.3.4.1 What Needs to be Done?

The overall development of tribals and other backward classes of the society should

include their empowerment in educational, social, economic and political sectors, while keeping in view their culture, heritage and traditional identity in terms of age old rights and privileges of these people along with maintaining harmonious relationships of social and economic development in society. Such a development involves ensuring actual participation of the beneficiaries in all developmental programmes where concept of planning is followed from below i.e. from the utmost under-privileged and under-developed sections of the society in term of their social, economic, and administrative levels. Recently, the ministry of tribal affairs has came up with the draft national policy on tribals which recognize the fact that tribals continue to live below the poverty line, have poor literacy rate, suffer from malnutrition and disease, and are always displaced from the land in the name of developmental projects. Briefly speaking, for overall development of tribals in Indian society, the following problems as recognized by the Draft Tribal Policy need to be redressed immediately (Saxena, at http://www.inclusion.in/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=580).

- Land alienation and indebtedness.
- Loss of access and control over forest.
- Involuntary displacement due to development projects and lack of proper rehabilitation.
- Ineffective implementation of Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Areas Act.
- Shifting cultivation.
- Weak governance and poor programme delivery in health and education.

i) **Land alienation:** Tribal areas have been massively encroached by the non-tribals and now the situation is that these areas cannot be declared as scheduled areas again. In Andhra Pradesh more than half of the land in Scheduled Areas is now owned by non-tribals while scheduled tribe cultivators/workers in Madhya Pradesh decreased from 76.45% in 1961 to 68.09% in 1991. Moreover, indebtedness has led to loss of 54-56% land by the tribals to non-tribals in Orissa. It is worthwhile to note that the tribals having lost possession over most of their productive land and are now forced to cultivate poor quality land making them more fragile economically and more vulnerable to natural calamities. This has also resulted in loss of administrative autonomy by the tribals in these areas.

ii) **Tribals and forests:** Post-independence scenario is such that there is deterioration in condition where forests are inaccessible to tribals to meeting their basic subsistence need. Such a condition has resulted due to deforestation, preference for manmade plantations in place of natural-mix forest, regulatory framework, diversion of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) and forest to industries, nationalization of NTFPs, exploitation by the government agencies and contractors in marketing of NTFPs and eviction of tribals from forest land. The threat of eviction of about 1.5 million tribals by the forest department is looming large. Large areas of cultivable land of indigenous tribals are being categorized as encroachment areas. Many of these cultivable lands are not encroachments but existed prior to both the Indian Forest Act of 1927 and the Forest Conservation Act of 1980. As the ownership was not recorded on such land, tribals were evicted from their land, declared it as forest land by these Acts resulting in an increase in the area under forest departmental control from 46 million ha in 1951 to 76 million in 1971. Unfortunately no procedures have been adopted by the government for doing justice in such cases, except in Maharashtra. Moreover, the government's inability to distinguish between the encroachers and other dwellers living on forest land since time immemorial is the main problem caused to the tribals.

Commercial exploitation of forests which was started during pre-independence era needed the availability of labour in inhabited forest area for their forestry operations which resulted into declaration of area near the forest settled by these workers as forest villages. In addition, forest department allocated some land to these labourers of subsistence cultivation besides permitting them to collect NTFPs and other forest products to meeting their domestic requirement. Felling bans and reduced commercial forest exploitation have created the crisis of work-availability of such villages, particularly due to their remote locations. The condition of such villages has become even worse when the areas were declared as national parks and sanctuaries under the Wild-Life Protection Act. The condition of these villagers become acute after 14th February 2000 when by the order of Supreme Court, the removal of dead, fallen and decaying trees as well as grasses was banned.

The following issues need an urgent discussion to consider the right and dignity of tribals on forest they dwell:

- The wholesale ban of regularization of encroachment;
- The wholesale ban of collection of NTFPs from protection areas;
- The ban on conversion of forest villages into revenue villages; and
- The ban on de-reservation of forest land.

A comprehensive central legislation must be enacted that gives due recognition to the forest rights of the tribals living in and around the particular forest. The Draft “Scheduled Tribes and Forest Dwellers Act” prepared by the campaign of survival and dignity, could be guide on this subject. In this matter, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs must play a greater role by closely monitoring the process of tribal regularization on their occupation over forest land.

Right of the forest must be ensued to the tribals by giving them opportunities as partners in the Joint Forest Management so that they can take their own livelihood decisions by forming cooperatives or corporation for major forest related operations which must also include policy on NTFPs, like its production, its access to poor and its marketing for maximizing income. For this silvicultural practices be developed considering high human and cattle pressure which on the one hand discourage old policy of commercial plantation on forest land and tree consumption and subsistence on private land and on the other hand encourage scientific forestry harmonious to environmental functions and sustainable production of wild-fruits, nuts, NTFPs, grasses, leaves and twigs as main products while timber as a byproduct from large trees like sal, teak, etc. In this regard, activities like regeneration and collection of minor forest produce must be recognized as right of the tribals inhabiting a particular forest and arrangements must be ensured by the government for marketing such produce by institutions like Tribal Development Cooperative Corporation, large size multi-purpose societies and forest development cooperatives without any interference of middleman, that too, by introducing minimum support prices for this forest products on the line of already existent minimum support prices for agricultural products. Forest department or the tribal development department with the assistance of civil society should play a major role in developing awareness among the tribals about the price prevailing in different markets, improving marketing practices and to act as a watch dog. Moreover, effort should be made by government to create better and improved infrastructure facilities like marketing yard, marketing information system, storage space and minimum processing facilities at the local level. In addition to this, simple processing like

broom-making, mat and rope-making should be encouraged in the household or cottage sector. It is worthwhile to mention here that such development programmes must be integrated in and around the forest area for efficient and better result. No displacement or resettlement of tribal villages for declaring any area as a National Park and Sanctuary should be allowed. No land shall be acquired under the act unless the process of land acquisition is accompanied with rehabilitation of affected people that too with superior standard of living before displacement with sustainable income above the poverty line. The laws and policies should be adapted to strengthen this co-existence and in maintaining the ecological balance.

- iii) **Tribal education:** This is a pity that massive job-vacancies exist in tribal regions in the face of acute educated unemployment in the country because of unavailability of educated tribals. The dropout rate among the tribals is alarming in the primary levels. There are high incidents of illiteracy among tribals. Moreover, suitable infrastructure facilities are also lacking along with inadequate and untimely supply of study materials. These problems are further aggravated by lack of commitment on the part of teachers, lack of proper orientation of teachers and other administrators about tribal life and culture, lack of participation by tribal communities in educational activities, lack of proper medical aid and balanced diet to tribal students, lack of monitoring mechanism to motivate the dropouts for continuation of education and lack of suitable self-employment opportunities to the educated tribal youth and dropouts.

The concerned state government should provide the requisite infrastructure facilities for promoting tribal education along with the regular conduct of orientation courses and workshops for teachers in tribal areas with the help of institutes like NCERT. The vista of information technology along with computer facilities in every school is a must for modernization of tribal education. Along with this formal education, adult and non-formal education should be compulsory introduced with the tribal-based reading material in every tribal village. The involvement of NGOs in promoting tribal education needs great encouragement as they can play very important role in this regard. For popularizing education in tribal areas, teaching must be imparted in tribal dialects with teaching aids specially prepared on the basis of local culture and environment and that too by including co-curricular activities of local tribes like folk-dances, vocal and instrumental music sessions, and sports and games for making education more interesting. In addition, proper medical and health cover for tribal students with mid-day meal prepared with locally available food material, by taking care of their culinary habits. Providing additional incentives like extra pair of cloths, school bags, foot-ware and to and fro-fares will further increase the interest of more and more tribal students to enroll themselves and continue education. Expert team involving educationist and anthropologist should visit the institutions with poor results to suggest the concerned authorities for taking up remedial action so that the quality of education is improved for better results.

- iv) **Tribal art, culture and tradition:** Culture and art is an indicator of overall development of particular community in an area. But, there is no proper documentation of tribal art and culture due to lack of appreciation and encouragement of tribal art and culture. Moreover, inadequate information and database on tribal artisans and artists coupled with lack of awareness of culture and heritage of tribal communities is a major hindrance to the planners, administrators and field functionaries in promoting, conserving, developing and safeguarding the tribal heritage and tradition.

In this regard, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs can help in facilitating the continuation of rich cultural heritage of tribals by formulating a national policy on tribal culture including arts and crafts in consultation with Department of Culture of the Ministry of Human Resource Development. Such a policy should provide for training and field activities to encourage the tribal craftsmen, artists and folk-art performers at national, state and local levels including cultural melas and festivals. The national and state level Sangeet Natak Academies must also document the folk dances performed by the tribal artists and also identify distinguished tribal artists to preserve their rich cultural heritage.

- v) **Nutrition and health:** Although tribal people live in close proximity with nature, a majority of them are poor and need health care on account of malnutrition, lack of safe drinking water, poor hygiene and environmental sanitation. Malnutrition, under-nutrition are common among those tribals who largely depend upon food which they either gather or raise by using simple methods. The poor nutritional status of women directly influences their reproductive performance and their infant's survival, growth and development.

To conclude, giving tribal a greater role in co-management of their natural, social and economic resources will greatly increase the collective bargaining power of tribals. This is critical for tribals because it will help them in asserting a great say in the resources they manage and in negotiating rules and conditions in a manner that promote more beneficial management of these resources, and in participative decision-making of norms vis-a-vis governing natural and other resources. Such role for them is essential because the tribals avoid a situation where they are subjected to norms of resource-use and extraction that are untenable and turn them into offenders and undermine their ability to secure much needed resources. The state has very important role to play in this regard as the disempowered groups continue to be outside any such democratic, participatory and decentralized decision-making process. In such a situation, local social institutions that give voice to the disempowered must be actively promoted so as to make them function independently from the state, and the state has to play an active and objective role in facilitating their formation. The social dynamism of tribal affairs and development is such that effective strategies to promote tribals and their livelihood imply negotiating some kind of social consensus about criteria concerning tribal development and value to the society at large. This also implies that different individuals and social groups must work towards promoting the basic rights and opportunities of the tribals for their speedy, effective and sustainable development and welfare.

In the light of the above, we will present the important schemes of tribal welfare in the section that follows.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under "Answers to 'Check Your Progress' Questions."

- 1) What are the categories of tribal majority areas in India?

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2) What is the mandate of the Ministry of Tribal Welfare?

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3) What is the strategy followed for all-round development of tribals?

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4) List the major constraints in tribal development.

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10.4 IMPORTANT SCHEMES FOR TRIBAL WELFARE

We have discussed the policies and programmes of tribal development in Unit 9 of this Block. However, there are many specific schemes aimed at promoting different aspects of tribal welfare. So, the focus in this section will be on the different schemes of tribal welfare.

Schemes for tribal development/welfare can be divided into *two categories*, viz.

- i) Central-sector programmes which are fully financed by the central government, and
- ii) Centrally-sponsored programmes which are partly financed by the central government, and rest of the expenditure meted out by the concerned State governments.

According to B. D. Sharma ([http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/222/12/12 chapter3. pdf](http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/222/12/12%20chapter3.pdf)) financial resources for developmental and welfare programmes in a state may comprise the following elements.

- i) investment in the central and centrally-sponsored schemes;
- ii) state revenues;
- iii) share from certain central revenue;
- iv) plan assistance from the central government; and
- v) grants under Article 275(1) on the basis of the recommendations of the Finance Commission.

The utilisation of State funds is broadly classified under two categories: *Plan* and *non-plan*. The plan-fund technically covers all those items which are included in the State or the Central plan. The non-plan includes expenditure on general administration as also on the maintenance of development schemes.

The Special Central Assistance (SCA) for Tribal Sub-Plans is allocated between different states on the basis of three criteria: i) the tribal population of Sub-Plan area; ii) the geographical area of the Sub-Plan; and iii) the per capita gross output of the state. The weightage for these three elements has been fixed in a certain proportion. While the first two criteria are simple, the quantum of assistance on the basis of the third criterion is determined with reference to the difference between the inverse of the State's per capita gross product and the inverse of the per capita gross national product.

Ministry of Tribal Affairs promotes various Schemes/programmes aimed at welfare of the tribes (<http://tribal.nic.in/index2.asp?sublinkid=522&langid=1>). While we have already discussed different programmes of tribal development in Unit-9, we will present here a brief overview of different schemes undertaken by the Ministry.

10.4.1 Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-plan (SCA to TSP)

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs extends Special Central Assistance to the TSP States and Union Territories and also to North-Eastern States of Assam, Manipur and Tripura as an additional grant to these States/UTs. These grants are basically meant for family-oriented income generating Scheme in various TSP areas to meet the gaps, which have not otherwise been taken care of by the State Plan.

10.4.2 Grants under Provision of Article 275(1) of the Constitution

The Ministry provides Grant-in-Aid to TSP and tribal majority States under Article 275(1) of the constitution to meet the cost of such projects for tribal development as may be undertaken by the State Government for raising the level of administration of Scheduled Areas therein to the level of the rest of the State.

In the Ninth Plan, besides other projects, from the funds allocated under this Scheme (provision) it was proposed to establish 100 Residential Schools on the pattern of Navodaya Vidyalayas. Under the Scheme, funds are provided to all the TSP States and Union Territories having tribal population for construction of boys' and girls' hostels and Ashram Schools on sharing-basis (50:50) to States and 100% to UTs.

Vocational Training Centres in Tribal Areas: The scheme aims at upgrading the skills of the tribal youths in various traditional and/or modern vocations depending upon their educational qualification, present economic trends and the market potential, which would enable them to gain suitable employment or enable them to become self-employed. The scheme provides 100% grants, and is implemented through State Governments, UT Administration and NGOs. The scheme prescribes fixed financial norms. No construction cost is provided. The proposals by NGOs are required to be routed through State Government and the recommendation of the "State Committee for Supporting Voluntary Efforts" constituted under the chairmanship of Principal Secretary/Secretary, Tribal Welfare/Development Department of the State/UT are mandatory. The recommendation of the State Committee is valid for that financial year in which it is made.

10.4.3 Strengthening Education among Scheduled Tribe Girls in Low Literacy Districts

The gender scheme of the Ministry aims to bridge the gap in literacy levels between the general female population and tribal women through facilitating 100% enrolment of tribal girls in the identified Districts or Blocks, more particularly in naxal affected areas and in areas inhabited by Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs), and reducing drop-outs at the elementary level by creating the required ambience for education. The scheme recognizes the fact that improvement of the literacy rate of tribal girls is essential to enable them to participate effectively in and benefit from socio-economic development.

The scheme covers 54 identified districts in 12 States and 1 Union Territory where the ST population is 25% or more, and ST female literacy rate is below 35% or its fractions, as per 2001 census. In addition, any other tribal block in a district, (i.e. other than aforesaid 54 identified districts) which has scheduled tribal populations of 25% or above, and tribal female literacy rate below 35% or its fractions, as per 2001 census, are also covered. The scheme also covers PTG areas and gives priority to areas affected by naxalism. The scheme is implemented by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and autonomous societies of the State Governments / Union Territories.

The scheme primarily envisages the running and maintenance of hostels linked with schools running under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan or other schemes of Education Department. Where such schooling facilities are not available, the scheme has provision for establishing a complete educational complex with residential and schooling facility. The scheme has provision for tuitions, incentives and periodical awards to encourage the ST girls. The scheme does not provide for construction cost. The scheme prescribes fixed financial norms. The scheme also envisages the establishment of District Education Support Agency (DESA), which would be a non-government organization or a federation of non-governmental organizations, for varied functions like ensuring 100% enrolment, reducing dropouts, arrangement of preventive health education, monitoring the performance of NGOs, etc. The proposals by NGOs are required to be routed through State Government, and the recommendation of the "State Committee for Supporting Voluntary Efforts" constituted under the chairmanship of Principal Secretary/ Secretary, Tribal Welfare/Development Department of the State/UT is mandatory. The recommendation of State Committee is valid for that financial year in which it is made.

10.4.4 Grants-in-aid to State Tribal Development Cooperative Corporations and Others

This is a Central Sector Scheme with 100% grant available to the State Tribal Development Cooperative Corporation (STDCC) and other similar corporations of the State engaged in collection and trading of minor forest produce (MFP) through tribals. Grants under the Scheme are provided to strengthen the Share Capital of Corporations, construction of Warehouses, establishment of processing industries of MFPs, etc., to ensure high profitability of the corporation so as to enable them to pay remunerative prices for MFPs to the tribals.

Price support to and investment in share capital of TRIFED: The Ministry provides Grants-in-aid to its corporation, Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (TRIFED), to set off losses on account of fluctuations in prices of MFPs being marketed by it for ensuring remunerative prices to tribals engaged in collection of MFPs either directly or through STDCCs and such other Cooperative Societies.

The Ministry is the largest shareholder of TRIFED with over 99% contribution in its Share Capital. Under this Scheme, the Ministry provides funds to TRIFED as its contribution in the Share Capital.

10.4.5 Village Grain-Bank Scheme

This Scheme provides Grants for establishment of Village Grain-Banks to prevent deaths of STs specially children in remote and backward tribal villages facing or likely to face starvation and also to improve nutritional standards. The Scheme provides funds for building storage facility, procurement of weights and measures and for the purchase of initial stock of one quintal of food grain of local variety for each family. A Committee under Chairmanship of village Headman runs the Grain-Bank thus established.

10.4.6 Grant-in-aid to Voluntary Organizations working for Welfare of Scheduled Tribes

The prime objective of the scheme is to enhance the reach of welfare schemes of Government and fill the gaps in service-deficient tribal areas, in the sectors such as education, health, drinking water, agro-horticultural productivity, social security net, etc., through the efforts of voluntary organizations (VOs) / non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and to provide an environment for socio-economic upliftment and overall development of the Scheduled Tribes (STs). Any other innovative activity having direct impact on the socio-economic development or livelihood generation of STs may also be considered through voluntary efforts.

Under this scheme 90% grant is provided by the Ministry and 10% cost is required to be borne by the non-governmental organizations from their own resources, except in Scheduled Areas where the Government bears 100% cost. The scheme provides a list of categories of projects, viz. residential school, non-residential schools, 10 or more bedded hospitals, mobile dispensaries, computer training centers, etc., which could be covered under the scheme, and also prescribes fixed financial norms. The scheme does not provide any construction cost. The Proposals by NGOs are required to be routed through State Government concerned, and the recommendation of the "State Committee for Supporting Voluntary Efforts" constituted under the chairmanship of Principal Secretary/Secretary, Tribal Welfare/Development Department of the State/UT is mandatory. The recommendation of State Committee is valid for that financial year in which it is made.

10.4.7 Scheme on Research and Training

Under the Scheme "Research and Training" the Ministry provides financial assistance under *three components*:

- i) Grants to Tribal Research Institutes on 50:50 sharing-basis, for conducting Research and Evaluation Studies, Seminars, Workshops, etc;
- ii) Award of Research Fellowship to Tribal Students, on 100% basis, registered in Indian Universities; and
- iii) Supporting projects of All-India or Inter-State nature on 100% basis to NGOs / Universities, etc., for conducting research on tribal matters, for Travel Grants and for Publication of Books on tribals.

10.4.8 Scheme of Development of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGS)

Based on pre-agricultural level of technology, low level of literacy, declining or stagnant populations 75 tribal communities in 17 States and 1 Union Territory (Andaman & Nicobar Islands), have been identified and categorized as Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs). Considering the vulnerability of these groups, a Central Sector Scheme was introduced in the year 1998-99 for the all round development of PTGs.

The scheme is very flexible and covers housing, infrastructure development, education, health, land distribution / development, agriculture development, cattle development, social security, insurance, etc. During 2007-08, comprehensive long-term “Conservation-cum-Development (CCD) Plans” for PTGs have been formulated for Eleventh Plan period through baseline surveys conducted by respective State Governments / Union Territories. These Plans envisage a synergy between efforts of the State Governments and non-governmental organizations.

10.4.9 Post-Metric Scholarship for ST Students, Book Bank Scheme and Overseas Scholarships

The Post-Metric Scholarship Scheme provides financial assistance to all ST students for pursuance of post-metric studies in recognized institutions within India. The Scheme provides for 100% assistance from the Ministry to State Governments and UT Administrations implementing the Scheme, over and above their respective committed liabilities. The Ministry also gives financial assistance for setting up Book Banks in institutions running professional courses like Medicine, Engineering, Law, Agriculture, Veterinary, Chartered Accountancy, Business Management, and Bio-Sciences. Annually, Ministry provides financial assistance to 9 meritorious ST students for Post-graduate, Doctoral and Post-Doctoral studies in foreign universities / institutions of repute.

10.4.10 Up-gradation of Merit of ST Students and Scheme for Coaching

These Schemes provide 100% central assistance to State / UT Administrations. The up-gradation of merit Scheme is for arranging coaching classes in reputed colleges for developing competence among ST students for their better performance in competitive examinations conducted by various universities, institutes for admission to Medical and Engineering courses while the Scheme for coaching is for conducting Pre-Examination Coaching for tribal students for various examinations conducted by UPSC, SSC, Banking Services Recruitment Boards, etc.

10.4.10.1 Coaching for Scheduled Tribes

The scheduled tribe candidates coming from deprived families and disadvantaged environment find it difficult to compete with those coming from a socially and economically advantageous background. To promote a more level-playing field, and give ST candidates a better chance to succeed in competitive examinations, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs supports a scheme for coaching for disadvantaged ST candidates in quality coaching institutions to enable them to successfully compete in examinations for jobs / admission to professional courses.

The scheme supports free coaching to scheduled tribe students for various competitive examinations viz. Civil Services / State Civil Services / Other Exams conducted by UPSE like CDS, NDA, etc / professional courses like Medical, Engineering, Business

Administration / Banking / Staff Selection Commission / Railway Recruitment Boards / insurance companies, etc. The financial norms of the scheme have been revised during 2007-08. The scheme covers coaching fees, monthly stipend @ Rs.1000/- per ST student per month and boarding / lodging charges for outstation students @ Rs.2000/- per ST student per month for the period of coaching.

10.4.11 Scheme for Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups

You are already aware of the Vulnerable Tribal Groups as we have discussed in Unit-8 of this Block in the context of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs). You may recall that the PTGs constitute the most vulnerable section among the scheduled tribes. They have declining or stagnant population, low level of literacy, pre-agricultural level of technology and are economically backward. 75 such groups in 17 States and 1 Union Territory of A & N Islands have been identified and categorized as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (earlier known as Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs)). (For the States/UT-wise list of PTGs you may refer Unit-8 of this Block). Most of these groups are small in number, have not attained any significant level of social and economic progress and generally inhabit remote localities having poor infrastructure and administrative support. Therefore, they become the most vulnerable sections among the scheduled tribes.

In order to develop such groups, it becomes necessary to allocate adequate funds from Central Sector / Centrally-Sponsored and State Plan schemes for the socio-economic development of PTGs. However, it was observed that the funds provided under other schemes for STs were not reaching the PTGs adequately. Therefore, in 1998-99, a separate 100% Central Sector Scheme for exclusive development of PTGs was started. Based on the knowledge and experience gathered meanwhile, the scheme was improved during 2007-08 and revised in 2008-09, to make it more effective, and now it is called the Scheme for Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups. Thus, this scheme is nothing but the revised Scheme of Development of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGS).

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under "Answers to 'Check Your Progress' Questions."

5) What are the broad categories of tribal welfare schemes?

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6) List out important schemes of tribal welfare in India.

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- 7) Explain the need and importance of the scheme for development of particularly vulnerable tribal groups.
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10.5 SCHEDULED TRIBE CLAIMS AND RELATED MATTERS

Before an individual of the Scheduled Tribes makes any claims for related benefits it is essential that the individual first ascertains the Scheduled Tribe status as such. The ST status of concerned individual is ascertained as follows.

10.5.1 Ascertaining ST Status of Individuals

Where a person claims to belong to a Scheduled Tribe by birth, it should be verified (<http://tribal.nic.in/writereaddata/mainlinkfile/File1155.pdf>):

- i) That the person and his parents actually belong to the community claimed;
- ii) That the community is included in the Presidential Order specifying the Scheduled Tribes in relation to the concerned State;
- iii) That the person belongs to that State and to the area within that State in respect of which the community has been scheduled;
- iv) He may profess any religion;
- v) That he or his parents / grandparents, etc., should be permanent resident of the State/UT on the date of notification of the Presidential Order applicable in his case.
- vi) A person who is temporarily away from his permanent place of residence at the time of the notification of the Presidential Order applicable in his case, for example, to earn a living or seek education, etc., can also be regarded as a Scheduled Tribe, if his tribe has been specified in that Order in relation to his State / Union Territory. But, he cannot be treated as such in relation to the place of his temporary residence notwithstanding the fact that the name of his tribe has been scheduled in respect of that State where he is temporarily settled, in any Presidential Order.
- vii) In the case of persons born after the date of notification of the relevant Presidential Order, the place of residence for the purpose of acquiring Scheduled Tribe status, is the place of permanent abode of their parents at the time of the notification of the Presidential Order under which they claim to belong to such a tribe. This does not apply to the STs of the Lakshadweep for whom there is a requirement of being born in the UT in order to be eligible for ST status.

10.5.1.1 On their Migration

- i) Where a person migrates from the portion of the State in respect of which his / her community is scheduled to another part of the same State in respect of which his / her community is not scheduled, the person will continue to be deemed to be a member of the Scheduled Tribe, in relation to that State;

- ii) Where a person migrates from one State to another, he can claim to belong to a Scheduled Tribe only in relation to the State to which he originally belonged and not in respect of the State to which he has migrated.

10.5.1.2 Through their Marriages

The guiding principle is that no person, who is not a Scheduled Tribe by birth, will be deemed to be a member of Scheduled Tribe merely because he or she has married a person belonging to a Scheduled Tribe. Similarly, a person who is a member of a Scheduled Tribe will continue to be a member of that Scheduled Tribe, even after his or her marriage with a person who does not belong to a Scheduled Tribe.

10.5.2 Issue of Scheduled Tribe Certificates

The candidates belonging to Scheduled Tribes may get Scheduled Tribe certificates, in the prescribed form, from any one of the following authorities:

- 1) District Magistrate / Additional District Magistrate / Collector / Deputy Commissioner / Additional Deputy Commissioner / Deputy Collector / 1st Class Stipendiary Magistrate / City Magistrate / Sub-Divisional Magistrate / Taluka Magistrate / Executive Magistrate / Extra Assistant Commissioner (Not below the rank of 1st Class Stipendiary Magistrate);
- 2) Chief Presidency Magistrate / Additional Chief Presidency Magistrate / Presidency Magistrate;
- 3) Revenue Officers not below the rank of Tehsildar;
- 4) Sub-Divisional Officer of the area where the candidate and/or his family normally resides;
- 5) Administrator / Secretary to the Administrator / Development Officer (Lakshadweep Islands).

10.5.2.1 Punishment for Officials Issuing Scheduled Tribe Certificate without Proper Verification

Action is to be taken under the relevant provisions of the Indian Penal Code if any official is found to have issued a Scheduled Tribe certificate carelessly and without proper verification. This will be in addition to other actions to which they are liable under the appropriate disciplinary rules applicable to them.

10.5.2.2 Liberalization of Procedure for Issue of Scheduled Tribe Certificate to Migrants from Other States / Union Territories

Persons belonging to a Scheduled Tribe, who have migrated from one State to another for the purpose of employment, education, etc., experience great difficulty in obtaining ST certificates from the State from which they have migrated. In order to remove this difficulty, it has been decided that the prescribed authority of a State Government / Union Territory Administration may issue a Scheduled Tribe certificate to a person, who has migrated from another State, on the production of the genuine certificate issued to his father / mother by the prescribed authority of the State of the father / mother's origin except where the prescribed authority feels that a detailed enquiry is necessary through the State of origin before issue of the certificate. The certificate will be issued irrespective of whether the tribe in question is scheduled or not in relation to the State / Union Territory to which the person has migrated. However, they would not be entitled to ST benefits in the State they have migrated to.

10.5.3 Procedure for Inclusion in or Exclusion from the List of Scheduled Tribes

In June 1999, further revised on 25-6-2002, the Government approved modalities for deciding claims for inclusion in or exclusion from and other modification in the order specifying the lists of Scheduled Tribes. According to these approved guidelines, only those claims that have been agreed to by the concerned State Government, the Registrar General of India and the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (now National Commission for STs) will be taken up for consideration. Whenever representations are received in the Ministry for inclusion of any community in the list of Scheduled Tribes of a State / UT, the Ministry forwards that representation to the concerned State Government / UT Administration for recommendation as required under Article 342 of the Constitution. If the concerned State Government recommends the proposal, then the same is sent to the Registrar General of India (RGI). The RGI, if satisfied with the recommendation of the State Government, recommends the proposal to the Central Government. Thereafter, the Government refers the proposal to the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes for their recommendation. If the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes also recommends the case, the matter is processed for the decision of the Cabinet. Thereafter, the matter is put up before the Parliament in the form of a Bill to amend the Presidential Order. Cases for inclusion / exclusion which the State Government or the RGI or the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes does not support are rejected.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under "Answers to 'Check Your Progress' Questions."

8) What is the effect of marriage between a tribal and a non-tribal in respect of tribal status?

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9) List out the authorities who are competent to issue Scheduled Tribe Certificate.

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10) What are the consequences of an official issuing a Scheduled Tribe Certificate without proper verification?

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10.6 LET US SUM UP

The tribal welfare assumed greater significance since independence as the tribes belonged to the socially and economically most backward communities. Keeping in view the constitutional mandate, the Government of India and of the States and UTs have been involved in ameliorating the problems and conditions of tribes to pave the way for their upliftment and welfare. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India since its inception has been playing key role in formulating policies, programmes and schemes in ensuring effective implementation of the same for promoting tribal welfare. Since the tribal development policies and programmes have been highlighted in the preceding unit, in the present Unit, i.e. Unit 10, we have presented you a comprehensive and brief view of diverse schemes aimed at promoting the tribal welfare covering different aspects of their life.

We strongly believe that, through Units 8, 9 and 10 which together constituted this Block 3, you must have got holistic picture of tribal development and will use this information as the basis for your further reading and effective participation in the efforts of promoting tribal welfare. Further, we believe that you would be able to facilitate the involvement of all the intended beneficiaries as well as the agencies concerned with promotion of tribal development and welfare.

10.7 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS' QUESTIONS

- 1) The tribal majority areas in the country are broadly divided into three categories, viz.
 - i) Predominantly tribal states / union territories,
 - ii) Scheduled area, and
 - iii) Non-Scheduled areas in the states.
- 2) The Ministry of Tribal Affairs was constituted in October 1999 with the objective of providing more focused attention on the integrated socio-economic development of the most under-privileged sections of the Indian society, namely, the Scheduled Tribes (STs), in a coordinated and planned manner. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is the nodal Ministry for the overall policy, planning and coordination of programmes for development of STs which include the following:
 - i) Social security and social insurance to the Scheduled Tribes.
 - ii) Tribal welfare planning, project formulation, research, evaluation, statistics and training.
 - iii) Promotion and development of voluntary efforts on tribal welfare.
 - iv) Scheduled Tribes education including scholarship to students belonging to such tribes.
 - v) Development of Scheduled Tribes – All matters including legislation relating to the rights of forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes on forest lands (**Note:** It is important to note that the Ministry of Tribal Affairs shall thus be the nodal Ministry for overall policy, planning and coordination of programmes of development for the Scheduled Tribes. But, as far as sectoral programmes and schemes related to development of these communities is concerned policy

planning, monitoring, evaluation, etc., as also their coordination will be the responsibility of the concerned Central Ministries / Departments, State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. Each Central Ministry / Department will be the nodal Ministry or Department concerning its sector).

- vi) Scheduled Areas: a) Matters relating to autonomous districts of Assam excluding roads and bridge-works and ferries thereon; and b) Regulations framed by the Governors of States for Scheduled Areas and for Tribal Areas specified in Part 'A' of the Table appended to paragraph 20 of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution.
 - vii) Commission to report on the administration of the Scheduled Areas and the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes and issue of directions regarding the drawing up and execution of schemes essential for the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes in any State.
 - viii) The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (Commission for Scheduled Tribes).
 - ix) Implementation of the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 (No.22 of 1955) and the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 (No.33 of 1989), excluding administration of criminal justice in regard to offences in so far as they relate to Scheduled Tribes.
- 3) Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) Strategy has been adopted for all round development of tribal areas throughout the country since Fifth Five Year Plan. Under the TSP approach almost all tribal inhabited areas have been covered under any one of the following programmes, depending upon their population percentile: i) Integrated Tribal Area Development Project (ITDPs); ii) Modified Area Development Approach (MADA); iii) Clusters; and iv) Primitive Tribal Groups.
- The TSP approach ensures allocation of fund for tribal areas from State Plan as well as Central Ministries, at least proportionate to population of the tribals in the state (from state plan) and to the overall proportionate tribal population for the country from the budget of Central Ministries.
- 4) Some of the major constraints in tribal development and welfare are as follows.
- i) *Destruction of forests:* The depleting forest resources are threatening imminent food security for a good portion of the tribal population.
 - ii) *Lack of awareness:* There exists lack of awareness among tribal population about various developmental programmes launched by the Government of India and States, resulting in their exploitation.
 - iii) *Protection of tribal rights and concessions:* The tribals have been given numerous rights and concessions under various statutes of central as well as State Governments but they remain deprived of the benefits arising out of such statutory provisions due to their ignorance and apathy of enforcing agencies.
- 5) Schemes for tribal development/welfare can be broadly divided into two categories, viz.
- i) Central-sector programmes, which are fully financed by the central government, and

- ii) The centrally-sponsored programmes, which are partly financed by the central government, and rest of the expenditure meted out by the concerned State government.
- 6) Some of the important schemes of tribal welfare are as follows.
- i) Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-plan (SCA to TSP)
 - ii) Grants under provision of Article 275(1) of the constitution
 - iii) Strengthening education among the Scheduled Tribe girls in Low Literacy District.
 - iv) Grants-in-aid to State Tribal Development Cooperative Corporations and others.
 - v) Village Grain-Bank Scheme.
 - vi) Grant-in-aid to Voluntary Organizations working for Welfare of the Scheduled Tribes.
 - vii) Scheme on Research and Training.
 - viii) Scheme of Development of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGS).
 - ix) Post-Metric Scholarship for ST Students, Book-Bank Scheme and Overseas Scholarships.
 - x) Up-gradation of Merit of ST students and Scheme for Coaching.
 - xi) Scheme for Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups.
- 7) Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) constitute the most vulnerable section among scheduled tribes. They have declining or stagnant population, low level of literacy, pre-agricultural level of technology and are economically backward. 75 such groups exist in India spread over 17 States and 1 Union Territory (A & N Islands) and categorized as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups. Most of these groups are small in number, have not attained any significant level of social and economic progress and generally inhabit remote localities having poor infrastructure and administrative support. It is, therefore, necessary to allocate adequate funds from the Central-Sector or Centrally-Sponsored and State Plan schemes for the socio-economic development of PTGs. However, it was observed that funds provided under other schemes for STs were not reaching the PTGs adequately. Therefore, in 1998-99, a separate 100% Central Sector Scheme for exclusive development of PTGs was started as Scheme of Development of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs). Based on the knowledge and experience gathered meanwhile, the scheme was improved during 2007-08 and further revised in 2008-09 to make it more effective. It is now called the Scheme for Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups. The scheme is significant in the above mentioned socio-economic context of these groups as it is meant for their special protection and development, and checking the declining trend of their population.
- 8) In respect of tribal status, one guiding principle is that no person, who is not a Scheduled Tribe by birth, will be deemed to be a member of Scheduled Tribe merely because he or she has married a person belonging to a Scheduled Tribe. Similarly, a person who is a member of a Scheduled Tribe will continue to be a member of that Scheduled Tribe, even after his or her marriage with a person who does not belong to a Scheduled Tribe.

- 9) The candidates belonging to Scheduled Tribes may get Scheduled Tribe certificates, in the prescribed form, from any one of the following authorities:
 - i) District Magistrate / Additional District Magistrate / Collector / Deputy Commissioner / Additional Deputy Commissioner / Deputy Collector / 1st Class Stipendiary Magistrate / City Magistrate / Sub-Divisional Magistrate / Taluka Magistrate / Executive Magistrate / Extra Assistant Commissioner (Not below the rank of 1st Class Stipendiary Magistrate);
 - ii) Chief Presidency Magistrate / Additional Chief Presidency Magistrate / Presidency Magistrate;
 - iii) Revenue Officers not below the rank of Tehsildar;
 - iv) Sub-Divisional Officer of the area where the candidate and/or his family normally resides;
 - v) Administrator / Secretary to the Administrator / Development Officer (Lakshadweep Islands).
- 10) Action is to be taken under the relevant provisions of the Indian Penal Code if any official is found to have issued a Scheduled Tribe certificate carelessly and without proper verification. This action will be in addition to other actions to which the concerned officials are liable under the appropriate disciplinary rules applicable to them.

10.8 REFERENCES

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