

“Development deficits of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) and way forward”

Dr. Muniraju, S.B
Deputy Adviser Govt. of India
And
Ms. Rachita Thakur
Research Assistant
National Institution for Transforming India Aayog (NITI Aayog)
New Delh, India

ABSTRACT

The globally known Indigenous Communities are called as Scheduled Tribes in India, they live in about 15% of landmass, ranging from plains to forests, hills and isolated jungles. They predominantly concentrate in central India and in the North-eastern States. However, they have their presence in all States and Union Territories, still Shompens, Jarawas and Honges of Andaman and Nicobar Islands are Aborigines, some of the families of mainland have migrated to non-tribal states like Delhi, Haryana, Punjab and Pondicherry in search of livelihood opportunities.

These tribes encompass wide diversity of social, cultural, systems of self-governance, lifestyle etc. Scheduled Tribes India have been provided with some special protection by the constitution of India under Schedules V and VI. There are over 705 scheduled Tribe groups notified under article 342 of the Constitution, As per Census 2011 Scheduled tribes population constitute 8.6% of total population (10,45,45,716), highest population is in the State of Madhya Pradesh followed by Odisha and Maharashtra.

While some Scheduled Tribes have adopted a mainstream way of life at one of the spectrum, there are groups even now, at the other end, which are characterized by forest-based livelihoods, pre-agriculture level of existence, a stagnant or declining population, extremely low literacy and a subsistence economy. Such Endogenous groups are 75 in numbers residing in 17 states and 1 Union Territory have been identified and categorized as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (earlier known as Primitive Tribal Groups).

Key Words-

Union Territories, States, Scheduled Tribes, Constitution, Livelihoods,

Introduction-

The major Scheduled tribe groups consume major chunks of the tribal development benefits, including reservation in education, employment, political representation, benefits under various programs of Government etc. PVTGs not only need special attention but also need exclusive development and mainstreaming programs. In this context, the Government of India

Dr. Muniraju, S.B, Deputy Adviser Govt. of India And Ms. Rachita Thakur, Research Assistant
National Institution for Transforming India Aayog (NITI Aayog), New Delh, India,

initiated to identify the most vulnerable tribal groups in 1975, as a separate category called Primitive Tribal Groups PTGs and declared 52 such groups, while in 1993 an additional 23 groups were added to the category, making it a total of 75 PVTGs out of 705 Scheduled Tribes.

The Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) are original habitants of Indian Peninsula (Bharatha Khand), majority of the PVTG population lives in States like Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Tamil Nadu. Odisha has 13 PVTGs, the largest number for any state, there are considerable differentiation among them, most obviously with respect to size, cultural practices, social status, life style etc. there are 10 groups with a population of less than 1000 persons and 8 groups with a population of more than one lakh, there are some who's population less than 100 and some have even perished/ disappeared / amalgamated with major groups.

Current scenario of PVTGs-

The Human Development Index on PVTGs reveal that overall status in all spears is still remain far behind the Scheduled Tribes and far and far behind the mainstream communities residing in urban agglomeration. The educational status of these groups especially women is very low compared to other tribal groups, the health indicators such as Infant Mortality Rate (CMR), malnutrition and certain chronic diseases like Leukemia, Skin disorders etc. are very high and common. Thus the human development indicators of these tribes remain far behind any other weaker sections in the country including among the Scheduled Tribes. The initiatives of the successive Governments to bring them at par with the rest of the society are gradually making attempts to reach them. However, due to their isolation, lack of awareness, lapses on the part of local administrations in creating awareness and delivering essential services to these tribes at grass root level have made them to still live in vulnerable condition.

The 75 PVTGs are small in number, socially and culturally different from one another and lives in remote habitations with poor administrative and infrastructure facilities depending mainly on traditional occupations such as hunters and food gatherers and fewer are depending on cultivation in small land holdings depending on shifting cultivation. There are some PVTGs even on the verge of extinction, due to their aboriginal nature, they still roam in jungles for hunting and food gathering, there are instances of deaths due to attack by wild animals, snake bites.

The vulnerability of the PVTGs primarily shoots from the change in the economic system, loss of their traditional livelihoods, habitats and customary resource through the gradual exploitative intrusion of the market economy into their areas in the form of industrial projects, conservation, tourism, and the forest bureaucracy and so on. These conditions have led to the loss of their land and resources resulting in chronic malnutrition, starvation and ill health.

The PVTGs viz. Shompens and Sentinelese of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Birhors of Jharkhand, Abujh Marias of Chattisgarh, the Bondos of Odisha and the Cholanaickans of Kerala are the most vulnerable and gradually in the verge of extinction / disappearance from

their habitations. There were instances of PVTGs living in and around reserved forests are targeted and harassed by fringe elements, land mafias.

Occupational pattern & Life style-

The PVTGs of Andaman and Nicobar Islands viz. the Great Andamanese, Shompens, Onge and Jarwas are still aboriginals the major occupation of these tribes is hunting and gathering. Some Jarwas have also proved to be craftsmen with their skills in making arrows and metal tools. Apart for hunting and gathering, the great Andamanese have also started occupation like horticulture and poultry. The main occupation of Nicobarese is pig farming and horticulture.

In the sphere of economy the tribes of Andhra Pradesh present a heterogeneous structure, tribes like Samanths, Gadabas, Konda Reddis, Savaras etc., are mostly confined to hilly tracts mainly subsist on shifting cultivation as the flat land available for settled cultivation is very limited. The Chenchus go for hunting rather than farming, they sell the meat for their livelihood. They also collect jungle products like roots, tuber, fruits, beedi leaves, mahua flowers, honey, gum, tamarind and green leaves and sell it to the traders and government cooperatives for a meager income. Khonds are hunter and gatherers.

The tribal communities of Bihar mostly practice agriculture and agriculture labour as their major occupation. The Birjia tribe of Bihar depending on agriculture and only a few of them are indulged in occupations like food gathering, hunting, fishing, basketry and working as daily wage workers in towns. The major occupation of people of Savar Tribe is collecting of jungle produce and primitive agriculture, honey collection. Asurs are traditionally iron-smelters. They were once hunter and gatherers, having also involved in shifting cultivation. However, majority of them shifted into agriculture with 91.19 percent enlisted as cultivators. The “primitive subsistence economy” of the Birhors has been based on nomadic [gathering and hunting](#), particularly for monkeys. They also trap rabbits and titirs (a small bird), and collect and sell honey. They make ropes out of the fibers of a particular species of vine, which they sell in the markets.

The Kharia tribes of Jharkhand are in different levels of economic progress. The Hill Kharias are a food gathering, hunting and labour community. The Dhelkis are agricultural labourers and agriculturalists, while Dudh Kharia are exclusively agriculturists in their primary economy. Kharia people are skilled in cottage industries too. Since the Chotanagpur Plateau is the richest mineral belt in India, some of the Munda-Santal earns wages by mining. Both men and women work to bring home adequate income for their families.

The Korwas of Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and some parts of Uttar Pradesh live with distinct cultural history, diminishing demography, remote habitations, low levels of education, health and economic progress, have been recognized as one of the PVTGs in India. They have a low socio-economic status and several among them live below the poverty line. Most of the Korwa people are still hunters and gatherers, and are one of the most isolated. A small number have taken to settled agriculture, and are being assimilated into dominant society.

The communities of Gujarat state are diverse in their occupational status. Padhar tribes were sailors, now they are the tribe of expert fishermen and agriculturists. Previously, the Siddi's used to subsist on hunting and gathering, nowadays, they depend primarily on agriculture and agricultural labour. Bamboo work has been the traditional occupation of Kotwalia tribe and they still continue to pursue the same occupation, the Kolghas originally used to be engaged in catching the frogs from the ponds. Now this occupation has been totally decayed; therefore, they have taken up different occupations in different areas. In hilly areas, they resort to forest labour and other labour work; which also include preparing of baskets and Topla. Those who have habituated in or around urban areas have taken up petty jobs in factories or other labour work.

The Jenu Kuruba and Koraga are two Particularly Vulnerable Tribes in Karnataka. The Jenukurubas are primarily food gatherers, familiarly known as honey collecting tribe but are also good craftsmen in taming and handling elephants. Koragas are described as wild tribes of basket-makers and labourers, a few of Koraga own a cultivable land few have migrated to urban areas and working as scavengers in municipalities and city corporations at Mangaluru, Udupi, Karawara etc.

The Cholanaikan tribe of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and some southern parts of Karnataka depends on food gathering, hunting, fishing and trapping birds and animals and these are their traditional occupations, which a few of them pursue till today. A few of them are landowning cultivators. The majority of them are agricultural labourers / some are working as plantation laborers. The Kadars were hunters and gatherers. Nowadays, many of them have become settled cultivators, agricultural labourers, basket-makers, mat-weavers and petty shop owners. A few are engaged in government services as forest guards and peons. The seasonal collection of minor forest produce also contributes to their income. Kurumbas is a food gathering community in Tamil Nadu. Their traditional occupation of hunting and food gathering still continue to be followed by a large section of the community but some are shifted to small scale agriculture and some are working as plantation labourers. Kota is a community of blacksmiths, goldsmiths, carpenters, tanner, rope-makers, potters, washer men and musicians performing at Toda and Badaga funerals. Traditionally the Kota were potters. At present, agriculture is the mainstay of livelihood for many of them.

The Irulas, traditionally, were hunters and trappers of porcupines, rats and snakes. Now they are settled cultivators, agricultural labourers and plantation labourers. Basketry and food gathering are still secondary occupations for them. Paniyan used to depend largely on wage labour for their livelihood, but presently they are also engaged in fishing, settled cultivation and in government services. The pastoral Toda made the Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu their home, and this area they shared with the Kota, Kurumba, Irula and Badaga for centuries. Traditionally, the Toda are pastoral, but of late about a quarter of them have taken up commercial cropping, particularly the cultivation of vegetables like potato, cabbage, tomato etc.

The Sahariya tribes of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh traditionally are engaged in the collection of forest produce. They are landless community and a good number of them were bonded laborers once upon a time. The Baiga tribe of Madhya Pradesh, distributed in the forest hill tracts of the Mandla and Balaghat districts, often collect forest produce like fuel and medicinal herbs to sell to the markets where they buy their daily needs although there is an increase in the number of wage earners among them in recent years. Bharia, a forest dwelling community, earn their livelihood by collecting and selling firewood, working as labourers for contractors, rickshaw pulling, working as errand-boys and being engaged as sharecroppers and grazers. Kamar another community practices shifting cultivation and basketry as their primary occupation while hunting, collecting forests products and fishing are subsidiary occupations.

In Maharashtra, Katkaria (Kathodia), Kolam and Maria Gond are the primitive tribes, the traditional occupation of the Katkari was catechu-making. Now, their economy is based on small scale agriculture. A number of them work as daily wage labourers poultry farming has recently been introduced in the Katkari economy. The Kolam are mostly cultivators or wage labourers. Maria Gond economy is forest based, the sources of their livelihood are hunting, farming and collecting minor forest produce. Some of them now work as labourers for the forest departments.

The Totos of West Bengal, subsist on agriculture, horticulture, poultry farming, animal husbandry and pig rearing. They produce paddy, bamboo and areca-nut. They also earn wages as porters in orange gardens during winter.

The primary occupation of the Reang is shifting cultivation, and their subsidiary occupations are carpentry, basket-making, fishing, hunting and cattle rearing, Reangs are primarily an agrarian tribe. In the past, they mostly practised the Huk or Jhum cultivation like most other Tripura tribes. However today, most of them have adopted modern agricultural practices. Educated reangs however shy away from agriculture and seek government jobs. Many occupy high posts in the bureaucracy and a few have even started their own businesses. Marram Naga is a Naga community who inhabit the hill ranges in the northern part of Manipur. The Marram cultivate paddy in terraced fields at the foothills. Hunting is done occasionally.

The Didayi tribal's residing on the hills of Odisha practice shifting cultivation and supplement their income by collecting forest produce and hunting. The forest is their chief economic resource and this is controlled by the clan. The Didayi from the plains have adopted settled cultivation. Cultivation is the primary occupation of the Kharia and most of them own cultivable land. The landless work as labourers in agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, some have taken up jobs in government and private sectors. The forest dwelling Lodha had access to the forest, but this privilege has now been curtailed. They supplement their income by working as daily-wage labourers, when hunting and fishing yield little return. Shifting cultivation is the traditional as well as the present day occupation of the Dongria-khond, collection of forest produce supplements their economy. The PVTG group Paudi Bhuiyan in Odisha is still not included in the list of Scheduled Tribes.

Most of the PVTGs are engaged in different occupations, but mostly are either into agriculture, agriculture labour, fishing, hunting, crafts making etc. Better settled tribes also work in mills and handicraft industries. Few tribes like have their own looms and make clothes for their own use as well for marketing to some extent in the changing economic situation.

Vulnerability Indexes-

A sample survey on the socio-economic conditions of the PVTGs was conducted during September 2018 and October 2018 in six states viz. Andaman & Nicobar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Kerala. The PVTGs covered in the survey are Asur, Birhor, Savar, Pahariya and Cholanaikkan survey has revealed that PVTGs require immediate attention of all stakeholders of development, an analysis of the some of the socio-economic indicators reveal vulnerability.

Poverty: poverty is the common phenomenon among most of the PVTG groups which lead to hunger, malnutrition, ill health, illiteracy, poor economic activity etc. In general, most of the Scheduled Tribes live below poverty line.

Table-1
Incidence of Poverty ratio across social groups

Social Groups	Rural			Urban		
	2004-05	2009-10	2011-12	2004-05	2009-10	2011-12
SCs	53.53	42.26	31.50	40.56	34.11	21.70
STs	62.28	47.37	45.30	35.52	30.38	24.10
OBCs	39.80	31.9	22.60	30.60	24.30	15.40
Total	41.79	33.80	25.40	25.68	20.09	13.70

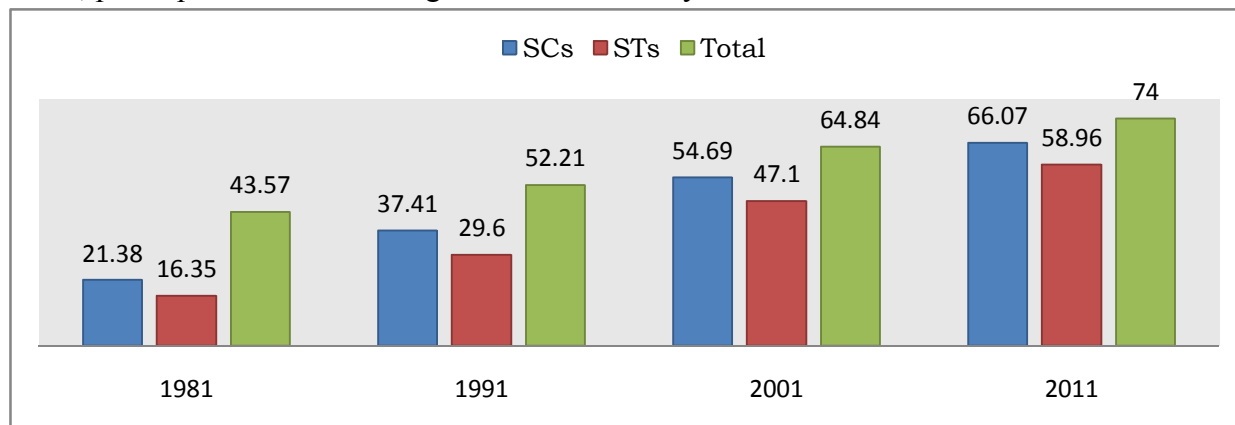
Source: Planning Commission

The data above depicts the poverty ratio for different social groups but reveals higher poverty ratio of Scheduled Tribes. Their economy is basically run on agricultural lines which do not yield them much income for livelihood. The most startling fact here is about 60 per cent of the population comprises of the non working members of the households. Around 29 per cent of tribals earn less than 20,000 annually, 5 percent of the respondents lie in the category of 20,000-40,000 income earned annually, only 4 percent of the households earn 40,000 and above annually.

The PVTGs are becoming increasingly vulnerable due to loss of their customary habitats and the livelihood resources which sustained them due non-recognition of their rights. This is somehow leading to remain poverty, hunger /starvation, malnutrition and ill-health and erosion of traditional occupations, which is threatening their very survival.

Education: Education plays key role in empowering any one to be part of mainstream society and aspire to grow with rest of the society. However, though the literacy rate among the Scheduled Tribes has gone up over the past decade, from a single digit literacy rate, the figures have increased to 30 to 40 % in many of the PVTGs. However, female literacy rate is still considerably lower compared to male counterpart.

Chart:1, Literacy of Social Groups, The literacy rate among Scheduled Tribes is much less than any other social group, as per the survey, approximately 50 per cent of the total study population are illiterate, 25 per cent has either completed or is pursuing primary education, around 11 per cent have completed their secondary education while only 5 per cent chose to opt for higher education. The enrolment rate at high school and higher education data reveal the decreasing trend as compared to other social groups besides higher dropout rate at different levels, participation PVTGs at higher education is abysmal.



Source: Census Data

Table-2
School Dropout Rate from Social Groups on All India (Class IX-X)

Sl.No.	Classes	1990-91	2000-01	2009-10	2014-15
SCs	I-V	49.4	45.2	29.3	4.46
	I-VII	67.8	63.6	52	5.51
	I-X	85	72.7	59	19.36
STs	I-V	62.5	52.3	34.5	6.93
	I-VII	78.6	68.7	57.8	8.59
	I-X	85	81.2	75.2	24.68
Total	I-V	42.6	40.7	30.3	4.13
	I-VII	60.9	53.7	42.5	4.03
	I-X	71.3	68.6	52.7	17.06

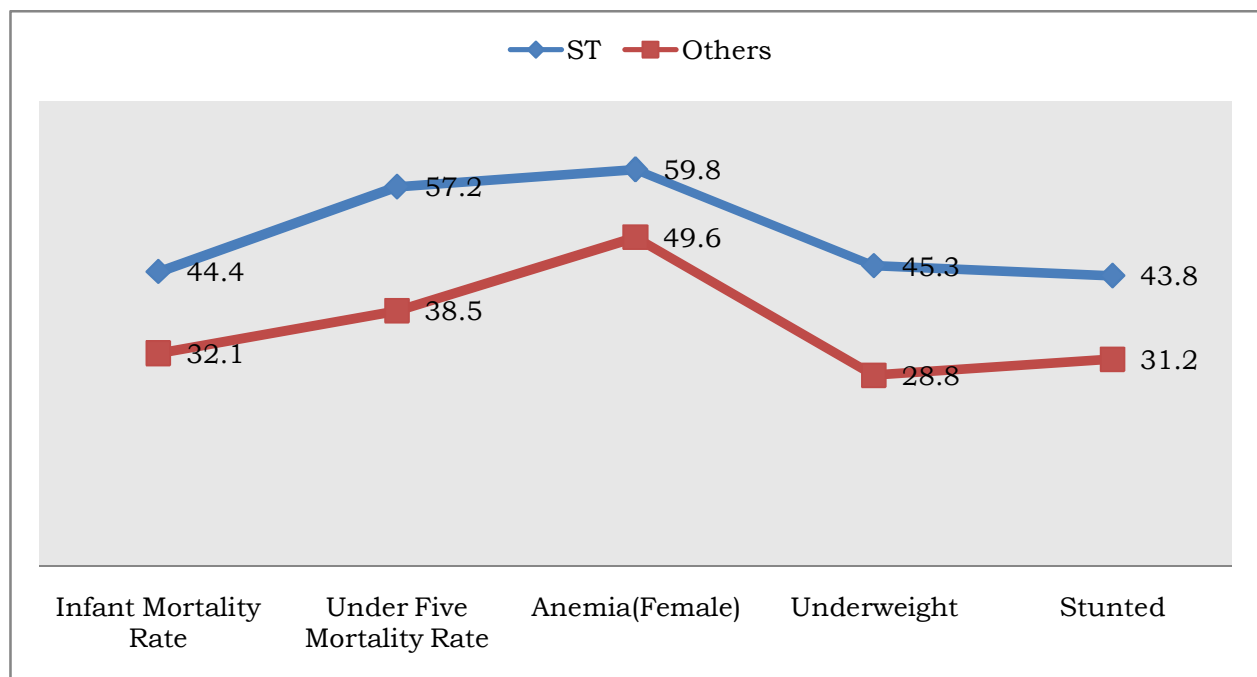
Source: Educational Statistics at Glance 2014, MHRD

The quality of education is also very poor in the tribal areas due acute shortage of qualified teachers, infrastructure etc., with an average literacy rate of 10% to 44% among PVTGs. This is largely due to the abysmal education infrastructure in tribal areas, poorly trained or absentee teachers, lack of teaching in tribal languages and irrelevant and alienating curriculum. The dropout rate compared to other social groups is high for Scheduled Tribes and it's much higher for PVTGs.

Health: Health is a prerequisite for human development and it is an essential component in well-being of humankind. Health problems of any communities are influenced by different factors such as social, cultural and economical factors. The health status of PVTGs is in an awful condition because of multiple factors like poverty, illiteracy, lack of safe drinking water, poor sanitary conditions, difficult terrain, malnutrition, poor maternal and child health services, unavailability of health and nutritional services, superstition and deforestation.

The diseases like sickle cell-anemia, upper respiratory problem, malaria gastrointestinal disorders like acute diarrhea, Intestinal protozoan, micronutrient deficiency and skin infection are common among PVTGs. Many of these diseases can be prevented by providing nutritional food, medical facilities and health awareness on time.

According to a survey (ITDA) conducted by the National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau, there is a 'food-gap'. The intake of various micronutrients, especially that of iron, Vitamin A, riboflavin and folic acid was found to be grossly inadequate, which is in consonance with inadequate intake of protective foods.

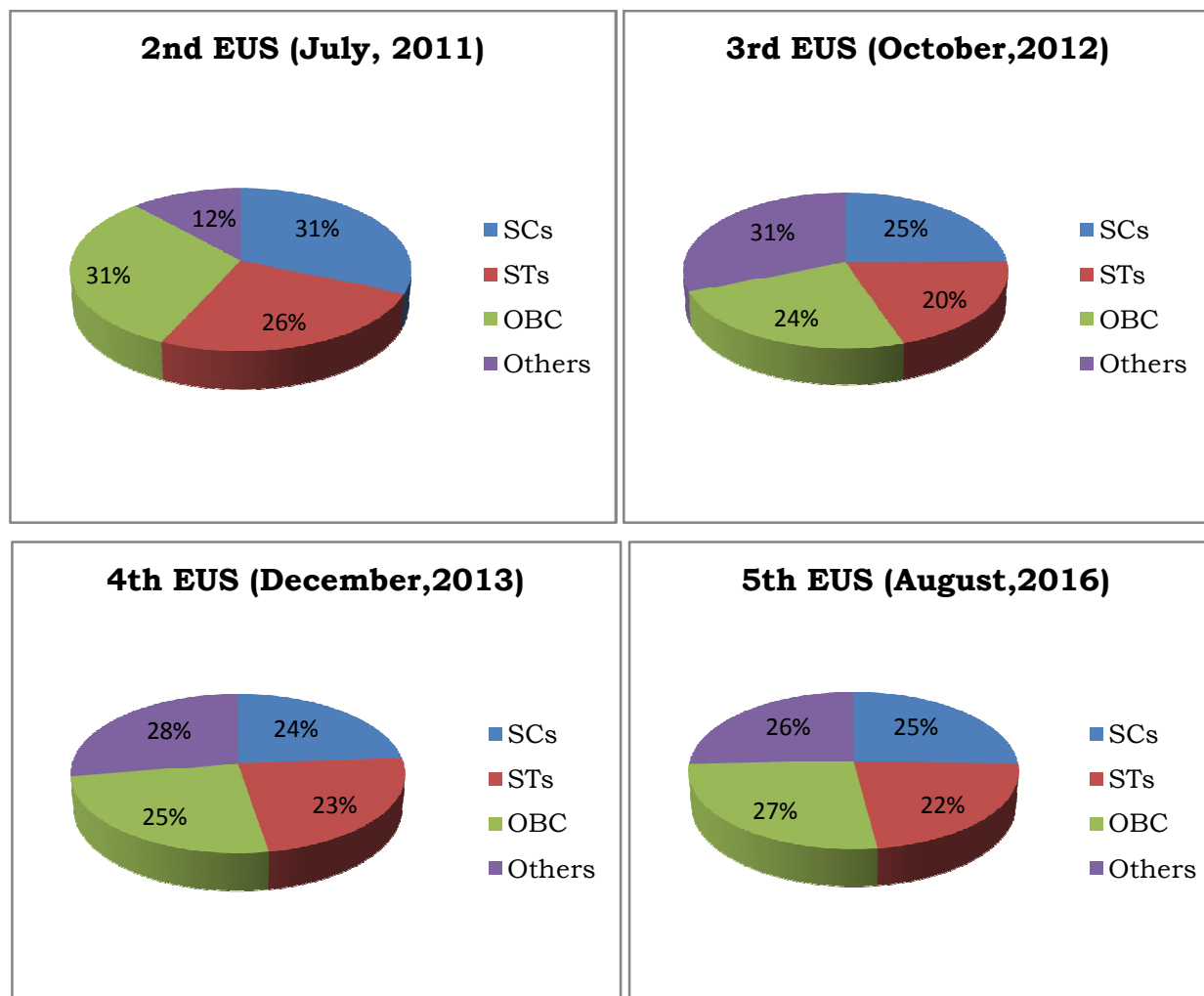


Source- NFHS-4, 2015-16

Chart:2, Health indicators, The data reveals that 52 percent of the households have no hospital nearby or within the range of 4 kms of their village while the rest 47 percent reported to have one within the prescribed range.

Employment: Tribals usually depend on agriculture for survival. Their economies are agrigarian economies run on traditional agricultural techniques which do not yield much income. The status of employment, under-employment and un-employment situations indicate that though most of the tribals are engaged in primary sector resulting in under-employment, tribal migrated to urban and semi-urban areas are mostly engaged in unorganized sectors as construction workers,

domestic workers and daily-wage labourers. Tribals engaged in unorganized sectors are subjected to exploitation like paying low wages, long hours of working, insecure work place, no social security etc. Due to high level of illiteracy among tribals they do not get better jobs in cities and towns. They either work as daily-wage labourer or contract workers on construction sites in towns and cities.



Source: Labour Bureau, M/o Labour and Employment.

Chart: 3, Unemployment Rate (UR) of persons aged 15 years and above according to Annual Employment and Unemployment Survey (UES), The data above reveal the incidence of unemployment among the Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes and others. The problem of unemployment among the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups is even worse. They are still far from the existing employment opportunities despite the availability of employment generation schemes for them. There is no separate reservation for PVTGs in public employment and admission in educational institutions.

Article 16(4) of the Constitution enables provision of reservation to Backward Class of citizens, who are not adequately represented in the State. Reservation is provided to Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) through executive

Dr. Muniraju, S.B, Deputy Adviser Govt. of India And Ms. Rachita Thakur, Research Assistant National Institution for Transforming India Aayog (NITI Aayog), New Delh, India,

instructions issued from time to time, as per extant instructions, reservation is provided to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes at the rate of 15%, 7.5% and 27%, respectively, in case of direct recruitment on all-India basis by open competition. In case of direct recruitment on all-India basis otherwise than by open competition, the percentage fixed @ 16.66%, 7.5% and 25.84%, respectively.

Table-3
Basic Amenities in India- A comparison of All Social groups and STs (Census 2011)
(figures in percentage)

Sr.No	Indicator	All Social Groups	ST
1.	Housing Condition		
	Total Houses	246,692,667	23,329,105
	Good Houses	53.1	40.6
	Livable Houses	41.54	53.13
	Dilapidated Houses	5.35	6.25
2	Drinking Water		
A	Households by location of the main source of drinking water		
	Within the premises	46.6	19.7
	a. Tap water from treated source	68.37	53.67
	b. Tap water from un-treated source	42.9	28.7
	Near the premises	35.8	46.7
	Away	17.6	33.6
B	Households by type of source of drinking water		
	Perceived full intervention (treated tap water, hand pump etc.)	65.46	53.82
	Perceived partial intervention (untreated tap water, covered well, Tube-well/ Borehole etc.)	21.62	19.58
	Perceived non intervention (Un-covered well, Spring, River/ Canal, Tank/ Pond/ Lake, Other sources etc.)	12.92	26.6
3	Sanitation		
A	Availability of latrine		
	Households having latrine facility within the premises	46.9	22.6
	Households not having latrine facility within the premises	53.1	77.4
	Night soil removed by human	0.3	0.1
	Open defecation	49.8	74.7
B	Availability of bathing facility within premises		
		42	17.3

C	Waste water outlet connected to (Closed drainage)	18.1	6.1
---	---	------	-----

Source: Census 2011

Whereas, actual representation as per reply quoted in a Parliament Question No. 5491 answered on 28.3.2018, based on information received from 77 Ministries/ Departments including their attached/ subordinate offices, the representation of SCs, STs and OBCs in the posts and services under the Central Government as on 01.01.2016 is 17.49%, 8.47% and 21.57% respectively. However the data of employment in PSUs is missing. Though the representation of STs indicate 8.47% more than their population proportion but the representation of PVTGs having Government jobs is too low and not in proportion their population.

The data above clearly depicts the poor and backward condition of the Scheduled Tribes in general. However, it is not much difficult to understand the situation of the PVTGs who are living in remote and inaccessible areas with poor basic infrastructure and other amenities. According to the Census 2011, 33.6 per cent Scheduled Tribe households do not have access to drinking water in or near their premises and figures for PVTGs are even worse.

Some inferences drawn from the data reveal that 37 percent of the population reside in huts, 35 percent live in semi pucca houses, 21 percent live in pucca houses while 5 percent have no houses to live in. only 33 percent of the households have electricity have in their houses while on the other hand 67 percent still have to live without electricity. Only 1 percent of the households get drinking water from house taps, 16 percent use water from public taps, 23 percent of the households get drinking water from public wells and 58 percent have no specific resource of drinking water. Figures regarding the toilet and sanitation facilities are disturbing to an extent that more than 62 percent of the study population has no toilet facility at all, 9 percent defecate in an open pit, 27 percent have an individual septic latrine while none of the villages have community toilets. The situation is no different for bathrooms, 92 percent of the population have no bathroom facility while 3.6 percent either use open bathrooms or community bathrooms. According to the survey, 87 percent of the population reported of having no proper drainage system in their habitations, only 12 percent have reported presence of open drainage system.

Existing Initiatives for PVTGs and Scheduled Tribes

There are some existing schemes for the development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups in all spheres but there is a dire need to regulate and upgrade those schemes in accordance with the changing scenario. These schemes have been initiated with a sole objective of development of the Scheduled Tribes including PVTGs. Regulatory bodies have also been created for the planning and execution of the schemes. These initiatives are:

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is the nodal Ministry in the Center and Departments of Tribal Welfare / Social Welfare in the States / UTs are implementing various programs for inclusive development of Scheduled Tribes. However, an exclusive scheme namely "Development of PVTGs" is being implemented by the Center through State Governments & UT

Dr. Muniraju, S.B, Deputy Adviser Govt. of India And Ms. Rachita Thakur, Research Assistant National Institution for Transforming India Aayog (NITI Aayog), New Delh, India,

Administrations covers the 75 identified PVTGs among Scheduled Tribes in 18 States and UT of Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The scheme covers funding for activities like housing, land distribution, land development, agricultural development, animal husbandry, construction of link roads and installation of non-conventional sources of energy for lighting purpose, social security including Janshree Beema Yojana or any other innovative activity meant for inclusive development of PVTGs.

Educational and economic development programs are considered as priority for inclusive development of Scheduled Tribes. Some the educational programs are scholarships at various levels of education such as Pre-Metric, Post-Metric, Top-class education, National Overseas Scholarship, National Fellowship, Free-Coaching, Hostels, Ekalvya Model Residential Schools, educational loans at subsidized rates etc.

To eradicate economic insecurity and ensure financial inclusion credit facilities at subsidized rate of interest, Stand-up India, Mudra scheme, land purchase schemes, irrigation facilities etc. are under implementation. To improve infrastructure free housing, land for construction of houses, drinking water, and electricity were also brought in. Besides that, health facilities, insurance and social security programs, are also being implemented for inclusive development of Scheduled Tribes. National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation, State Corporations, Tribal Marketing Federation of India are also making efforts to mitigate the poverty among tribal's and bring them at par with rest of the society.

Priority is also assigned to PVTGs under the schemes of Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP), Grants under Article 275(1) of the Constitution, Grants-in-aid to Voluntary Organizations working for the welfare of Schedule Tribes.

The Central Ministries and Departments (41) obligated to implement schemes and programs for welfare and development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, mandatorily allocate some percentage of funds formulate and implement programs to empower scheduled tribes including PVTGs under Tribal Sub-Plan. However the dominant groups among Scheduled Tribes corner benefits most of the time rarely PVTGs also get some benefits.

Article 338-A, of the constitution provides for National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, which looks after constitutional, legislative and statutory safeguards for Scheduled Tribes and intervenes in-case of violation.

The National Scheduled Tribes Finance & Development Corporation (NSTFDC), was established during 2001 and it is incorporated as a Govt company having licence under Section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956 i.e. a company not for profit to provide concessional financial assistance to scheduled tribes for their economic and educational development.

NSTFDC provides term loan for viable projects costing upto Rs.25 lakh per unit. Under the scheme, financial assistance is extended upto 90% of the cost of the project and the balance is met by way of subsidy/promoters contribution/margin money. The rate of interest is 6% p.a. upto Rs.5 lakh and 8% p.a. up to Rs.10 lakh and 10% above Rs. 10 lakh. The Adivasi Mahila Sashakikaran Yojana (AMSY) is an exclusive scheme for economic development of scheduled tribes women under which NSTFDC provides loan upto 90% for the project costing upto Rs.1 lakh at an interest rate of 4% p.a.

NSTFDC has disbursed Rs.1654.92 crore in its twelve years of operation up to 31.03.17. In the recent past, NSTFDC has introduced new schemes for educational and skill development of scheduled tribes such as Adivasi Shiksha Rinn Yojana (ASRY), Awareness Generation, etc.

The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED), came into existence in 1987. It is a national-level apex organization functioning under the administrative control of Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India. TRIFED has its registered and Head Office located in New Delhi and has a network of 13 Regional Offices located at various places in the country.

Way forward

There exists a gap between the needs of the PVTGs and the government schemes. Irrespective of the purpose for which the scheme is initiated, it should first be able to reach out to the actual beneficiaries for which it is meant. Therefore, the need of the hour is to acknowledge the gap between the actual beneficiaries and the government schemes. The schemes are thus far away from the ground level realities of the tribals especially the PVTGs and hence they should be direct beneficiary oriented for better implementation and execution. The tribals are usually unaware of what the government is doing for their betterment which results in low participation rate of tribals in the enrollment in the schemes. The fact is, if tribals don't have proper knowledge of what there are supposed to do, It is really difficult for them to seek help. Hence, tribals should be made aware of the benefits available to them.

The PVTGs are in dire need of focused and exclusive attention on priority for their protection, empowerment and mainstreaming in view of their fragile living conditions and prevailing socio-economic vulnerability and diminishing numbers. The protection of their land and resources is central to the dignified survival of all tribal people.

The PVTGs require exclusive and special share in beneficiary oriented programs, habitat development programs and reservation in political representation, employment and education. Providing opportunity to PVTGs in delivering Government schemes in their habitation would be an added advantage for community participation such as engaging health workers, language teachers, Food & Civil supply agents, etc. promoting commercial cropping, organic farming, honey cultivation, horticulture, fishery, animal husbandry, handicrafts in convergence model and providing marketing facilities can enable PVTGs to sustain and reach the mainstream at par with rest of the society.

The continued and constructive efforts of the Government at all levels i.e. National, State and Rural Local Bodies should work in hand to hand and make comprehensive efforts to establish convergence for integrated and inclusive development in all spheres of the socio-economic and educational upbringing of PVTGs. So that the dream of Mahatma Gandhi i.e. Ram Rajya, can be achieved by taking PVTGs all along with the mainstream society towards egalitarian society.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dr. Muniraju, S.B, Deputy Adviser Govt. of India And Ms. Rachita Thakur, Research Assistant National Institution for Transforming India Aayog (NITI Aayog), New Delh, India,

1. K. S. Singh, the Scheduled Tribes, Volume III, Anthropological Survey of India, 1994,
 2. Statistical Profile of Scheduled Tribes in India 2013, Ministry of Tribal Affairs Statistical Division, Government of India,
 3. Census of India, Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India,
 4. Educational Statistics at a glance, Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of School Education and Literacy, Statistics Division, New Delhi 2018,
 5. Report of the High Level Committee on Socio-Economic, Health and Educational status of Tribal Communities of India,
 6. <http://yournib.com/socio-economic-life-of-the-lodhas-a-primitive-tribal-group-of-odisha/>,
 7. National Health Family Survey, International Institution for Population Science s, NHFS-4, 2015-16,
 8. <https://www.tribal.nic.in/pvtg.aspx>
-