

OVERVIEW

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India has the largest concentration of tribal people anywhere in the world except perhaps in Africa. The tribals are children of nature and their lifestyle is conditioned by the Eco-system. India, with a variety of ecosystems, presents a varied tribal population throughout its length and breadth.



DISTRIBUTION

The areas inhabited by the tribals constitute a significant part of the under developed areas of the country. The tribals live mostly in isolated villages or hamlets. A smaller portion of their population has now settled in permanent villages as well as in towns and cities. On the whole, as per rough estimates, the prominent tribal areas constitute about 15 percent of the total geographical area of the country.

THE MAJOR TRIBES

There are 533 tribes (with many overlapping types in more than one State) as per 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:

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:	Garo, Khasi, Jayantia, etc.
Orissa:	Birhor, Gond, Juang, khond, korua, Mundari, Oraon, Santhal, Tharua, etc.
Rajasthan:	Bhil, Damar, Garasta, Meena, Salariya etc.
Tamilnadu:	Irular, Kammara, Kondakapus, Kota, Mahamalar, Palleyan, 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, Jayantia, Mikir etc.
Arunachal Pradesh:	Dafla, Khampati, 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:	Chdddangpa, Garra, Gujjar, Gaddi, etc.

Among the notified tribes, some groups are still at most primitive stage. 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 population. Such groups (75 Nos.) are named as Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs). They are spread over 17 States and one Union Territory.

DEMOGRAPHICAL CHANGES

Population in millions			
Census Years	Total population	Population of ST	S.T. %
1951	361.1	19.1	5.29
1961	439.2	30.1	6.85
1971	548.2	38.0	6.93
1981	685.2	51.6	7.53
1991	846.3	67.8	8.10
2001	1028.6	84.3	8.19

According to 1991 Census, the population of the Scheduled Tribes in the country is 67.8 million, which is 8.1 percent of the total population of the country. The population of Scheduled Tribes has been found increasing after 1951.



The decades population growth between Census Year 1981 to 1991 in respect of tribal population has been much more (31.64%) than the same for entire population (23.51%).

As compared to the sex ratio for overall population (927 females per 1000 male), the sex ratio among the Scheduled Tribes is more towards females (972 Females per thousand Males).

LITERACY & EDUCATION

As per 1991 Census, the literacy rate among tribals (29.6%) is found to be far below the overall literacy of the country (52.2%). The female literacy rate among tribals is far lower (18.2%) as compared to overall female literacy for the country (39.2%). However, the significant point is the increase in total as well as female literacy among tribals, though still at lower pace as compared to the overall population for the country.

The Enrolment Ratio (1997-98) and School Drop-out rates for overall and STs is:

S.No.	Parameters	Overall	STs
1.	Enrolment Ratio (1997-98) (Class I-V) Class VI-VIII)	89.7& 58.6	90.7 43.2
2.	School Drop-out rate (1993-94)	52.8	77.7

HEALTH

The development of health facilities for scheduled tribe got impetus through successive plans. The Primary Health Centres (PHC) Health Sub-Centres (HSC) and ICDS project established in tribal areas are indicators of extension of medical services to the tribals. The medical facilities though not adequate are hardly used by tribals living in isolated villages and hamlets.

Medical Centres Types	Total No.	No. in S.T. Areas	Percentage
Primary Health Centres (1996)	21853	3258	14.9
Health Sub Centres (1996)	132778	20355	15.3
ICDS Projects (1998-99)	4200	70	17.8

ECONOMIC STATUS

The majority of tribals constitute the labour work force though their participation in works is declining, but not steadily. More than half of the rural tribal population is found to be below poverty line as per latest survey available with Ministry of Rural Development (1993-94). However, there is a perceptible declining trend in persons from tribal communities below poverty line.



The per capita income of tribals continues to be one of the lowest in the country and their alienation from their own land continues. As on January 1999, the tribals were alienated from 9,17,590 acres of tribal land and only 5,37,610 acres of such land was restored as per latest statistics published by the Ministry of Rural Development.

CONSTRAINTS IN TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

There are innumerable constraints responsible for lower pace of tribal development process than desired. Some of the major constraints are:

(i) **Destruction of forests:** The forests are not only the source of livelihood for tribals but there exists an intricate relationship between tribals and forests in forest Eco-systems. 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 Government of India and States, resulting in their exploitation.

(iii) **Protection of Tribal Rights & 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.

STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT: THE TSP APPROACH

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 entire tribal inhabited area have been covered under any one of the following, depending upon their population percentile:

- i) Integrated 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 tribals in the state (from state plan) and to the overall proportionate tribal population for the country from the budget of Central Ministries.

PLANS/PROGRAMMES OF THE MINISTRY - AN OVERVIEW

Ministry of Tribal Affairs continued to implement various Schemes/programmes aimed at welfare and development of Scheduled Tribes. An Overview of the activities of the Ministry is as follows:

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.

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 it was proposed to establish 100 Residential Schools on the pattern of Navodaya Vidyalayas.

GIRLS HOSTEL

The Scheme for construction of Girls Hostels for STs is a useful instrument for spreading education among tribal girls whose literacy is only 18.91% as per 1991 census. Under the Scheme funds are provided to all the TSP States and Union Territories having tribal population for construction of hostels on sharing basis (50:50) to States and 100% to UTs.

BOYS HOSTEL

Like the Scheme for Girls Hostel, under this Scheme funds are provided to states on sharing basis (50:50) and 100% to UTs for construction of Boys Hostel for STs.

ASHRAM SCHOOLS IN TRIBAL SUB-PLAN AREAS

The Ministry under the Scheme provides funds to all the States and UTs having tribal population for establishment of residential schools for STs in an environment conducive to learning near their habitations 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/modern vocation 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% grant, 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 State Committee is valid for that financial year in which it is made.

STRENGTHENING EDUCATION AMONG SCHEDULED TRIBE GIRLS IN LOW LITERACY DISTRICT

It is a gender scheme of the Ministry. The scheme 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, other than aforesaid 54 identified districts, which has scheduled tribal populations 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 Territory.

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 and 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 drops outs, 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 are mandatory. The

recommendation of State Committee is valid for that Financial year in which it is made.

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 (STDCCs) and other similar corporations of 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 TRIFED

The Ministry provides Grants-in-aid to its corporation, 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 other such Cooperative Societies.

INVESTMENT IN SHARE CAPITAL OF TRIFED

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.

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 & 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.

GRANT-IN-AID TO VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATION 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 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 State Committee is valid for that financial year in which it is made.

SCHEME ON RESEARCH & TRAINING

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

- (i) Grants to Tribal Research Institutes on 50:50 sharing basis; for conducting Research & 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, Travel Grants and for Publication of Books on tribals.

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 of Andaman & Nicobar Island, 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 territory. These Plans envisage a synergy between efforts of State Governments and non-governmental organizations. POST METRIC SCHOLARSHIP FOR STS, 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.

UPGRADATION 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.

OTHER IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES OF THE MINISTRY

Besides the implementation of aforesaid plans/programs, the Ministry conducted the following activities during the year for improving the implementation of programs and Schemes:

SECRETARIES' CONFERENCE

A two-day conference of State Secretaries of Tribal Welfare was organized in New Delhi on 16-17th May, 2000, in which the Directors of Tribal research Institutes located in various States also participated. The deliberations in the conference was focused on the need for State Tribal Research Institute devoting more time for tribal research and building up of necessary information and data bank on various aspects of tribal life and culture, so that the Central and State Government could draw upon then in formulating policies and programs for development of tribal. The State Governments/UTs were also urged to ensure concrete measures for timely implementation of various Schemes/Programs for tribal welfare and better targeting of the beneficiaries.

MINISTER'S MEETING ON ARTICLE 275(1) OF THE CONSTITUTION

This was for the first time that State Governments were asked to submit specific Schemes for infrastructure development. A Minister level meeting was held with the State Governments and Schemes were approved prepared by the State Governments for improvement of infrastructure in the Scheduled Areas. At the Conference following were emphasized:

- i. timely implementation of the Scheme
- ii. timely submission of utilization certificates, quarterly report, etc.,
- iii. undertaking only infrastructure building Schemes under Article 275(1) but not individual beneficiary Schemes;
- iv. exercising strict vigilance on NGOs working in their state through District Collectors.

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, Engg., 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.