



## PROS AND DRAWBACKS OF SCHEDULED TRIBES PARTICIPATING IN POLITICS IN KARNATAKA

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### ABSTRACT

*Understanding the nature and state of tribal political engagement is a major focus of the research. The political engagement of tribal people in a caste-dominated society has been examined for the benefit of the local community, the advancement of the society, and the growth of the tribal community. The research is crucial to understanding how tribal political involvement affects the extension of constitutional protections to members of scheduled tribes. In addition to this, the research's other objectives include analysing the socioeconomic and political situation of the tribal community as well as the kind of tribal political engagement and how it has affected the growth of tribes in the study region.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 OVERVIEW

About the awful nature, scope, and complexity of the issue, it is appropriate to refer to India as a "Melting Pot" of races and tribes. Arranging the Indian people and civilizations in the order of their arrival on this continent is a very challenging undertaking for prehistorians and anthropologists. Even their later history, up to the Aryan invasion, is buried in mystery, as correctly stated by Fuchs (1973). Although stone tools from the lower Paleolithic era have been discovered in many locations, no skeletal remains from these older ages have been discovered up to this point. Furthermore, the number of and significance of the human fossil discoveries from later eras are insufficient for us to draw any firm conclusions about the prehistoric ethnic makeup of India. But it is now widely accepted that the indigenous tribes of India are often descendants of later prehistoric people. It is now obvious that the indigenous people of the Indian subcontinent do not form a uniform race. They entered India from various directions and various regions of Asia, and they also belong to different races. Some tribes may even have degenerated from a higher technological level due to unfavourable circumstances. The indigenous tribes of India cannot yet be classified into distinct racial groupings.

The likes of Risley, Guha, Majumdar, etc. tried. However, they have not persuaded me very much so far. Therefore, additional anthropological study is required before the racial and cultural history of the indigenous inhabitants of India can be given in a clear light. Even if there is a lack of adequate archaeological and paleontological material to draw firm conclusions regarding the origin and subsequent history of the many ancient tribes of India, a narrative of their heyday and fall is nevertheless possible as far as the historical era is concerned. The historical evidence does provide some insight into their lives, and we begin to piece together trustworthy proofs rather than sticking to speculative models. Only the development of script and the beginning of written records have made this feasible.



The tribal Republic of Vasali was destroyed during the first historical era when minor tribal enclaves were conquered by outside invaders or indigenous imperial powers. On the western border's tribal outposts, Alexander destroyed them. The Atvikas, who were seen as possible problem solvers, are referred to by the Arthashastra. Assuring forest tribes of his dominance and compassion, Ashoka warns worth-western tribes with grave consequences in the event of an insurrection. The historical social framework is explored by Sharma (1961). He claims that the Dharmasutra (600–300 BC) and the Manusmriti (200–200 AD) carried on the previous fusion and integration process. The idea of blended castes is only a creative and practical Brahminical explanation for this development. Mixed castes were thought to be the offspring of men who had mated with women from various castes. The Nishada, who lost their former positions and relied on hunting during this time, the Andhras, Madigas, and Chenchus, who also hunted animals, and the Kshalas, whose earliest historical phases saw small tribal pockets being subjugated by invaders or indigenous imperial powers after the destruction of the Tribal Republic of Vasali, are a few of these possibly Brahminized tribes categorised as mixed castes. On the western border's tribal outposts, Alexander destroyed them. The Atvikas, who were seen as possible problem solvers, are referred to by the Arthashastra. Assuring forest tribes of his dominance and compassion, Ashoka warns worth-western tribes with grave consequences in the event of an insurrection. The historical social framework is explored by Sharma (1961). He claims that the Dharmasutra (600–300 BC) and the Manusmriti (200–200 AD) carried on the previous fusion and integration process. The idea of mixed castes was only a creative and practical Brahminical approach to explain this tendency. Mixed castes were meant to be the offspring of a man who had a lady from a different caste. Among these perhaps Brahminized tribes classified as mixed castes were the Nishada, who lost their previous status during this time and survived by hunting, the medas, andhras, madigas, and chenchus, who also hunted animals, the Kshalas, and the madigas.

## **1.2 PANCHAYATS IMPACT ON POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

The establishment of statutory panchayats in the post-independence era also caused a setback for the conventional tribal panchayats. The situation has already undergone a significant transformation since the advent of community development activities. As a result, those connected to the authorities had many opportunities to rise to leadership positions locally. As a result of educational initiatives in the tribal regions, more educated young began showing an interest in village politics. They were also impacted by the elections at the national level in India, which led to an increase in factions and parties in the villages (and tribal villages were no exception), the creation of regional parties, and other outcomes. The indigenous people had never heard of general elections, community development initiatives, panchayat elections, etc. A few bright, recently educated people strove to seize every chance to strive for leadership roles, and as a result, rival politicians arose as new village chiefs, presenting a challenge to tribal India's conventional power structure.

Thus, since 1947, India's local political system has seen several major changes. The constitution established universal adult franchise and expanded restricted franchise. This had a "huge impact" on Indian villages. The rural masses, especially tribal people, overnight began to play a big role in determining Indian politics, which in turn caused the political segments of the Indian society to become more politicized, which may be seen as a sign of a substantial social transformation. This does not imply that the old village community has been democratised by the simple introduction of adult franchise.



### **1.1.1 Scheduled Tribes of India**

A category in law and administration is referred to as "ST." People who fall within the politico-administrative ST category tend to be backward and secluded. This phrase was first used on January 26, 1950, when India's republican constitution was established. Earlier than that, the colonial government referred to tribal people by a variety of names, including "Animist" (Census Report of 1901), "Tribal Animists" or "people following tribal religion" (Census Report of 1911), "Hill and Forest Tribes" (Census Report of 1921), "Primitive Tribes" (Census Report of 1931), "Backward Tribes" (Government of India Act, 1935). The use of the word "ST" was also a topic of discussion in the Constituent Assembly. The Constituent Assembly's tribal delegate Jaipal Singh preferred the name "Adivasis" over ST. The word "Adivasi" is a general term with no clear legal de jure connotation, whereas "ST" has a fixed meaning because it enumerates the tribes. This is why Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the chairman of the Indian constitution's drafting committee, said that the word "ST" was universally accepted. The phrase was primarily used to identify and distinguish between groups of people who differed in terms of their physical characteristics, languages, religions, customs, social structures, and other factors. But in this essay, "ST," "tribes," and "tribal people" are all mentioned in the same sentence.

## **2. UNSOLVED PROBLEMS AND CONTINUING CONCERNS OF SCHEDULED TRIBES**

Not because they are poorer, have fewer assets, or are less educated than the general population, tribal communities are still vulnerable today. Rather, their vulnerability often results from their inability to deal with the repercussions of their integration with the mainstream economy, society, cultural, and political systems—from which they were historically shielded by their relative isolation. The demands of planned development prompted the construction of highways, mines, dams, and other facilities on tribal grounds. These were followed by the simultaneous processes of displacement and a confrontation between development and the preservation of interests. Institutions of the market or official State institutions were made to coexist in an awkward fashion with tribal practises and institutions. The migration of strangers who were better prepared into tribal regions also put the natives at a severe disadvantage. Devastating effects included generational bondage, extensive land alienation, and the loss of livelihoods for the indigenous peoples' already precarious socioeconomic basis. A tiny group of bureaucratic initiatives did nothing to stop the rapid pauperization, exploitation, and dissolution of tribal communities as the tribes struggle with these devastating results. Therefore, the tribal people continue to experience suffering and deal with a variety of "Unresolved Issues" and "Persisting Problems," which call for the government's prompt response.

### **2.1 Displacement of Tribals**

A critical issue that the government has yet to solve is the forced or voluntary displacement of tribal people from their homes and natural ecosystems and subsequent restoration. Approximately 21.3 million people were relocated between 1951 and 1990 in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Orissa, according to information that is now accessible. among those, 8.54 million (40%) are tribal people, and among those, only 2.12 million (24.8%) have so far been able to be relocated. Large irrigation dams, hydroelectric projects, open-pit and



underground coal mines, super-thermal power plants, and mineral-based industrial units are only a few of the development projects that caused displacement. In big mining ventures, tribal members lose their land not just to the project's administrators but also to non-tribal outsiders who move in and seize both the property and the newly available commercial and small-scale industrial possibilities. The insufficient rehabilitation of the displaced indigenous peoples has made their problems worse as they are forced into a vortex of growing poverty, unemployment, assetlessness, and debt servitude. The most vulnerable groups continue to be women and children.

## **2.2 Tribal Land Alienation**

In addition to being the tribal peoples' primary source of economic resources, land plays a significant role in their culture as the foundation of their social and religious customs. Over time, the resource base of indigenous communities tends to deteriorate due to encroachments, fraudulent transfers, violent evictions, mortgages, leases, and other public use acquisitions. According to information held by the Ministry of Rural Development, in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, and Tripura in January 1999, 4.65 lakh cases of alienation of tribal land totaling 9.17 lakh acres were registered. In contrast, just 2 lakh cases—covering a total of 5.31 lakh acres—were resolved in the interest of 1.561 million indigenous households. These states include Andhra Pradesh (2.79 lakh acres), Madhya Pradesh (1.58 lakh acres), Karnataka (1.30 lakh acres), and Gujarat, which are all afflicted by large-scale tribal land alienation. (1.16 lakh acres). Studies have shown that the issue of land alienation among tribal members is perpetuated by a lack of political and administrative will, as evidenced by the unwillingness to change legal provisions, close existing loopholes, and take prompt administrative action to identify alienated land and return it to the tribal members with delivery of possession.

## **2.3 Indebtedness**

The issue of debt among indigenous peoples is not just a sign of their poverty but also the broader economic ailment, including illiteracy, a lack of resources for participating in gainful activity and covering unforeseen expenses, and poor purchasing/bargaining power. As a result, the issue persists and becomes more dangerous as the tribal people's debt drives them deeper into extreme poverty and forces them to sell off their meagre resources, including small plots of land, to pay off the loans' exorbitant interest rates. The commencement of commercial spirits sales in tribal communities has begun to deprive the indigenous community of resources, putting them vulnerable to debt and abuse. Although the Guidelines (related to the Excise Policy in Tribal Areas, 1975, released by the Ministry of Social Welfare) have been largely adopted by the States and UTs, adequate follow-up action is not made for its implementation. The Governors of states having Scheduled Areas were granted authority to enact laws and impose limitations on money lending operations in the Scheduled Areas under the Fifth Schedule to the Constitution. 16 TSP states and UTs have relevant laws and regulations in place to control the money-lending industry and provide debt relief. However, owing to the inadequate enforcement apparatus and absence of alternative sources of credit for addressing the tribals' consumption and production demands, the legislative efforts to restrain the operations of money-lenders and merchants have failed to have much of an impact on the severity of the situation. Tribals have a tendency to become reliant on predatory money lenders due to a lack of solid policies supporting consumer credit, which leads to debt-bondage. Government subsidy-cum loan programmes often exacerbate and complicate the issue of tribal indebtedness by pushing the tribes even further into debt.



### **3. CONSTITUTIONAL SAFE GUARDS, WELFARE SCHEDULED TRIBES IN INDIA**

The Indian Constitution is when we first saw the phrase "Scheduled Tribes." Scheduled Tribes are those tribes or tribal communities, or portions of or groups within those tribes or tribal communities, that are considered under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this Constitution. This definition is found in Article 366 (25) of the Constitution. The process to be followed in the question of specifying Scheduled Tribes is outlined in Article 342. In accordance with the authority granted by Clause (1) of Article 342, the President may, after consulting with the Governor of a State or Union Territory, designate all or a portion of a tribe as a Scheduled Tribe about such State or Union Territory. With the protections outlined in the Constitution for these communities in their respective States/UTs, this grants the tribe, or a portion of it, constitutional standing.

Any tribe or tribal group, or portions of them, may be included in or excluded from the list of Scheduled Tribes by legislation, according to Clause (2) of the Article. As a result, the President's notification order, after consultation with the relevant State Governments, establishes the first list of Scheduled Tribes in reference to a given State or Union Territory. These instructions may only afterwards be changed by a Parliamentary Act. The page also offers a listing of Scheduled Tribes by State/Union Territory rather than by all of India.

Although not explicitly stated in the Constitution, this standard has gained widespread acceptance. The definitions from the 1931 Census, the first Backward Classes Commission's reports (Kalelkar, 1955), the Advisory Committee on Revision of SC/ST Lists (Lokur Committee, 1965), and the Joint Committee of Parliament on the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment Bill, 1967) are all taken into consideration. (Chanda Committee, 1968). The President has issued nine orders to date defining the Scheduled Tribes regarding the States and Union Territories in order to carry out the authority granted by Clause (1) of Article 342 of the Indian Constitution. Eight of these are now in use in their original or modified forms. Due to the reorganisation of Goa, Daman, and Diu in 1987, one Order, namely the constitution (Goa, Daman, and Diu) Scheduled Tribes order 1968, is no longer in effect. Goa's list of scheduled tribes was moved to part XIX of the Schedule to the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 under the Goa, Daman and Diu Reorganization Act of 1987 (18 of 1987), while Daman and Diu's list was moved to part II of the Scheduled to the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) (Union Territories) Order, 1951.

#### **3.1 Scheduled Areas**

Unlike other groups, the Scheduled Tribes live near one another. Therefore, having a regional approach to development operations and also regulatory arrangements to safeguard their interests is easier. The Fifth Schedule and Sixth Schedule provisions have been included into the institution to safeguard the rights of the Scheduled Tribes with relation to land alienation and other social considerations. Scheduled places are defined in the Fifth Schedule under Article 244 (1) of the Constitution as any places that the President may proclaim to be Scheduled Areas by order after consultation with the Governor of that State. According to article 244(2) of the Constitution, the sixth schedule applies to the northeastern regions that have been designated as tribal territories and calls for the establishment of District or Regional Autonomous Councils there. These councils have extensive administrative, judicial, and legislative authority.



#### **4. SCHEDULED AREAS AND SCHEDULED TRIBES COMMISSION (STC)**

A Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission has been established by order dated July 18, 2002, under the chairmanship of Shri Dileep Singh Bhuria, a former member of parliament, together with 10 other members. In 1960, the last such Commission was established. The Commission will review the development techniques used so far to promote the welfare and development of the Scheduled Tribes and provide recommendations for the general structure of a workable, all-encompassing tribal policy. The Article 15(4) forbids any kind of discrimination based on religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth in state-maintained or publicly accessible facilities. The state is given the authority to make any arrangements under this Article's Clause 4 for the scheduled communities or for the social and educational progress of underprivileged groups. By way of a modification, the state set aside places for SCs and STs in technical, engineering, and medical schools as well as in scientific and specialised courses.

Another exemption to the right to equality of opportunity in situations involving public employment is included in Article 16(4) of the Fundamental Rights. Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, Denotified Communities, and Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities are included under the umbrella term "Backward Classes," which is used to refer to all backward classes. Although not directly addressed in 16(4), the scheduled Tribes that are described in Article 15(4) are nevertheless included in the category of backward classes. If the backward classes are not sufficiently represented, the state may create arrangements for seat and appointment reservations in their benefit. A member of a backward class may be appointed to a position that is not designated for them if they are deemed to be qualified following a competition, albeit the state cannot reserve an excessive proportion of the positions for these groups.

According to Article 17, all citizens are entitled to freedom of speech and expression, the right to peaceful assembly without fear of violence, the right to join associations or unions, the freedom to move around India's territory without restriction, the right to live and work anywhere on the country's territory, the right to purchase, own, and dispose of property, and the right to engage in any occupation, trade, or business. To preserve the interests of the people who belong to the scheduled Tribes, significant exceptions have been provided to several basic rights. For the purpose of safeguarding the interests of the Scheduled Tribes, the State is permitted to impose reasonable limits on the exercise of any rights related to travel, land acquisition, and settlement under Provision (s) of Article 17. The issue of alienation of tribal land in Assam really has extremely strong ties to two basic rights, namely (1) the right to dwell and settle in any area of Indian territory and (2) the ability to acquire, keep, and dispose of property. As a result of this Article, the Untouchability (Offences) Act 1955 was passed by the Indian Parliament. The Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955 was subsequently renamed and amended in 1976 by the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955, making the penalties under this Act more severe by establishing special cells, tribunals, mobile squads, offering legal help, etc. Despite this, the practice of untouchability is still widespread and has evolved into many forms. There were 3,148 instances recorded under the Act in 1992, but only 778 were reported in 1998, indicating a decline in the number of cases. (Annual Report of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment 1999-2000). Investigation delays, low conviction rates, and low acquittal rates are three of the main factors that contribute to the non-registration of such cases in tribal communities.



## 5. CONCLUSION

Political socialisation and political culture are seen as causal variables that affect how people participate in politics. A defining element that, when activated, characterises how people behave in that society's political life is the form of political socialization, which produces certain ways of living and shapes the political culture of a given society. The idea of political socialisation places a strong focus on how political ideals are passed down from one generation to the next. It is based on the idea that a political system cannot operate effectively without internalisation of social and political norms and values is taking place at the same time. The process of integrating a person into his or her society is known as socialisation. It entails the person being adopted by the other members of his group, which in turn grants him status and designates the function he performs in the community's existence.

Because human "social institutions take on such varied and changing forms," it makes sense that the socialisation of males is complicated and multifaceted. This means that a complex web of variables, including linguistic diversity, economic, social, and technological development, religious and aesthetic values, and a history of cultural tradition, influence how men socialise and adapt to their sociocultural and economic environments. Here, learning assumes a specific relevance that must be completely understood in order to properly comprehend its crucial role in influencing how individuals live their lives.

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